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BLACKWOOD'S

Edinburgh

MAGAZINE.

VOL. CXXIX.

JANUARY—JUNE 1881.



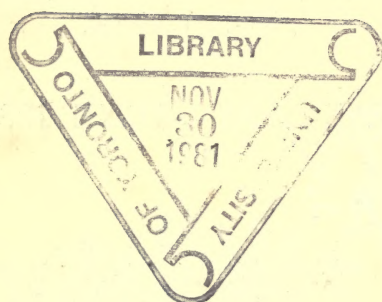
WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, EDINBURGH;

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37 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

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BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCLXXXIII.

JANUARY 1881.

VOL. CXXIX.

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES.

NO. I.—BENVENUTO CELLINI.

"ALL men of every class, who have done something creditable, ought, being trustworthy and honest men, to write their lives with their own hand," says the great artist and extraordinary personage whose name stands at the head of this page. No words more fit could be found with which to begin the discussion of a class of books which, if not altogether so valuable as Ser Benvenuto considers them, have supplied many excellent and more amusing pages to general history. If his advice had been largely followed, it would scarcely be hyperbole to say that the world would not contain the volumes that might have been written—so that we may conclude ourselves fortunate that the impulse only comes to one now and then; yet we have no doubt it comes to a great many who never get the length of autobiography. When old age arrives gently and pleasantly,—when the man who has lived an active and important life finds himself, without much pain, and with many consolations

of comfort, and honour, and observance, put aside from it, and left with a long and wealthy past behind him, and a somewhat impoverished present thinly filling its place,—it is a very natural impulse which bids him find amusement and companionship for his old age in making the great public his confidant, and telling his own story to the vague crowds whom he will never see, but in whom imagination represents to him many an unknown friend and sympathetic soul. Whatever there may be of humiliation in the sense that he has found himself, or, still worse, that others have found him, no longer fit for the charge he has so long held, is softened by the consciousness that he can leave behind a record of many things worth knowing, clear up, perhaps, some historical mysteries of his period, and keep the incidents of his own life alive among men. An old statesman in his dignified retirement, an old priest in the quiet of his parsonage or his cell, an old author whose inventions are over,

and who finds his experiences more interesting to himself than any effort of romance—the spectator feels that nothing could be more appropriate than this occupation of the halcyon years which every labouring man seems to have a right to before the end. We follow the calm days of their retired leisure with a pleasant sense of fitness. It is seemly and natural that they should dis-course to us seated in the easy-chair of old age, which is a natural throne and pulpit ; and the old man's narrative of his youth has a tender interest, a suppressed and gentle pathos, which goes to our hearts. But it is only a few who have this blessed and beautiful old age. The majority of men carry their cares with them to the very brink of the grave, and only get rid of their burden when the shoulders fail under it : indeed the majority of men do not live to old age at all, and so have neither the means nor the opportunity of giving us the benefit of its seclusion and calm. Sometimes—the will and all surrounding circumstances being in favour of the intended revelation—it is postponed too long, till the hand falls powerless and the memory is insufficient to the task. Sometimes just enough is accomplished to make us feel the excellence of the method, when the pen drops from the feeble fingers, and has to be taken up by somebody who knows the subject only as others know it, from outside, seeing the mountains like molehills, and upsetting the perspective of events. But yet we have a sufficiently large list of completed and finished efforts to show their value ; and it is an instructive and somewhat sad pleasure for the student of human nature to watch those shadows as they appear before him, each anxious to give the best account of itself, some in serene human unconsciousness

thrusting their own little tale of events between him and the history of the world, finding their infant or their apple-tree of more importance than the convulsions of nations. Still even an apple-tree, the wonderful crop upon which so excites its owner as to confuse his apprehension of the importance of the greatest public event, is of use in its way as revealing that undercurrent of peaceable life which streams serenely on, whatever storms may convulse the air, and which is the real secret of national continuance. So long as that goes on unaffected, the heart of a country is safe though its throne should be upset a hundred times. Thus the narrowest domestic record widens our experience of human nature, which, of all things involved, changes least from one generation to another ; and the spectacle of its insensibility to the great catastrophes and revolutions going on around, its calm perseverance in its own way though the pillars of the earth should be shaken, is as interesting and instructive as any other part of the perennial drama. To see how little agitated is the race even when it is agitated most, to listen to a soft little love-strain singing itself to all the gentle echoes under the very horrors and fierce excitements of the French Revolution, and to know that the least misadventure of his son Tom was more important to a village chronicler than the tragic exit of “the martyr Charles” or the coming of “the hero William,” are curious revelations ; but they fill up—better even than those narratives of the back-stairs and records of all the underplots that influence a great event, to which the world is so much addicted—the full and catholic story of human life. Thus, whether it is the exciting recollections of one who has been involved in imperial events, and holds the

clue of historical secrets, or the calm narrative of the rustic, over whose head these events have passed without ever disturbing his honest rest, every personal experience adds to our knowledge. Manners and customs alter, governments are turned upside down, laws are modified or overthrown, but man remains the same from age to age. And there is no better way of recognising ourselves as brothers across the continents and centuries than by those individual chronicles which carry the chain of kindred feeling from one generation to another without any material change.

When we begin our series with such a bizarre figure as that of Benvenuto Cellini, we strain this link of human resemblance almost as far as it can be strained—for to tell the truth, there are not many like him, either in the stormy self-sufficiency of his nature, or the undaunted frankness of his self-revelation. In both these points he is as remarkable as in his genius, which is saying much—for he was an admirable artist, inexhaustible in fancy, and full of the truest instinct, as well as the most swaggering of gallants, the fiercest of swordsmen, the most choleric of egotists. Involuntarily as we rush through his stormy narrative, another figure comes and stands beside us, suggested by the contrast,—the neat and trim figure, in periwig and ruffles, of our English model of secret biography, the demure and cunning, yet sagacious and genial Pepys. Nothing can be more unlike the complaisant murmuring of his own peccadilloes to his own bosom, of that most graphic and subtle commentator, his half-amused yet half-remorseful confessions, all under strictest lock and key, than the dashing strut and brag of the Florentine, whose

passions, both of violence and love, are set before us without a thought of apology or any consciousness of offence, and who professedly intends for the public eye the astounding record of a life spent in brawls and turmoils, in which his hand was against every man, and his own capricious liking the sole rule of his conduct. It is the air of reality about both men which brings them together in our fancy,—Pepys, with his leer of demure hypocrisy outside, and unabashed self-knowledge within; and Benvenuto, with his unbounded vanity, his hot temper, his brag and bluster, as true to the fashion of the fierce citizen-artist of the middle ages in turbulent Italy, as the other is to that of the judicious and wary official standing between a licentious court and a still partially Puritanical public, and doing his best to serve God and Mammon, with a half-humorous consciousness of the difficulties of that undertaking. Both men are perfectly frank; to both, their own interests and pleasures are supreme; and both have a sense of what is best, in their own way at least,—Pepys being invariably honest, and a supporter of honesty, in the most corrupt of ages; while all Benvenuto's virulence of temper and sense of personal superiority never blind him to excellence in art. But we need not follow a comparison which is not so much a comparison as a contrast. For while Pepys speaks under his breath, with traditional finger on his lip, with an alarmed enjoyment of his own candour, yet mischievous delight in the thought that it can never be profitable to anybody else, Benvenuto's determination is to proclaim everything, so that even the deaf may hear, and nobody suppose that he is not ready to stand to any one of his actions. Not a word that is *sotto voce* comes from his hasty lips; his artifices are

as frankly set forth as his amours, and his murders are accomplished in an open-handed and matter-of-course way, with which conscience evidently has nothing to do. He neither considers himself blamable, nor expects to be so considered by others, on account of a rival stabbed or a light love superseded. These are the customs of his time, with which no code of morals has anything to do. What he gives us is a record, not a justification, far less an apology, for conduct in which there is nothing to be ashamed of so far as he is aware, but rather a great deal to applaud, since his always prompt and ready action proves him a man who never loses an opportunity, never spares an opponent or relinquishes a pleasure.

The picture of his time which he sets before us is of the most animated description. It is full of kings and emperors, and reigning dukes and princes—even the Pope himself in all his impious grandeur, with his train of sons and parasites, sweeping by times across the scene; and in the busy streets a swarm of lesser men—painters, goldsmiths, artificers of every kind, even the carpenter singing at his work;—but in the front of all, and making even popes and emperors subordinate to his restless daring personality, this same Benvenuto, the greatest genius in his way, the readiest hand, the keenest tongue—

“Most forward still
In every deed or good or ill,”—

fearing neither cardinal nor bravo. Nothing is extenuate in the bold record. He is ready to answer Pope Paul himself, and to rate the great Francis, and to tell the Medici that they know nothing of art; while, on the other hand, he is as willing to work the guns of St Angelo as to manage the fine tools of the goldsmith, has his hand on his

sword at every suspicion of offence, and finds his natural place in every commotion, public or private. How he contrived during this storm of existence to execute so much fine, delicate, and elaborate work, is a problem most difficult to solve. His art is precisely that which we should imagine to have most urgently demanded unbounded quiet, protection, and peace; but he never rested, quarrelled with every patron he ever had, found rivals and enemies wherever he went, and made them where he had them not,—yet all the while went on elaborating the finest and minutest work, doubling the value of the precious metals in which he worked, making of a salt-cellar a prize for which princes contended; though all the while flinging out and in of these same princes' audience-chambers, too touchy to be censured, too hasty to be guided—a very tempest of a man. This combination of endless industry with perpetual interruptions seems the test of the capacity of the medieval artist. Perhaps in strict point of date we are wrong in applying this title to the favourite workman of the advanced Renaissance; but Benvenuto, though he had the advantage of classic models and the new spirit, is in himself as much a man of the middle ages as if he had lived two centuries earlier. And though dukes were necessary to his trade, and luxury the very breath of his artist-being, yet wherever he went—in the Pope's chapel or in the French king's gay and splendid court—he was always the same high-handed Florentine, arrogant and dauntless, who might have headed a tumult in the days of the Bianchi and Neri, or brawled in a Parlamento, or schemed and struggled with the *fuor-usciti*. We cannot say that the character is an amiable or even an upright one, but its force and picturesque tu-

multuous energy are not to be gained.

And this rapidity and precipitate force of life are all the more remarkable that Benvenuto wrote not in the fire of his youth, but when years had whitened his head if not subdued his spirit. He himself lays it down as a rule that those who follow his advice as to writing their own lives should not take up "this fine enterprise" till they have passed the age of forty. He himself was "approaching fifty-eight," when, "being in Florence, my native place, and contemplating the contrarieties that happen to all," at a moment when he felt himself more free from these contrarieties than he had ever been before, and blessed with more "content of mind and vigour of body" than he had ever known, he set about the composition of his memoirs. But it is evident that he was one of those who never grow old; and the narrative of his declining years is still hot and hasty, with all the force of youth.

The beginning of the story is very characteristic. "Although," he says, "such men as have by their endeavours given assurance of the valour that is in them, ought to be satisfied with being generally known and recognised as men of merit, yet we ought at the same time to do as others do; and as the curiosity of the world directs itself to certain points—the first of which is to know whether we derive our blood from persons of ancient and virtuous descent—I am Benvenuto Cellini, son of Giovanni, of Andrea, of Cristofano Cellini—" and so forth through many generations. Whether we are intended to conclude that the Roman officer Flor-entius of Cellino, after whom, he declares, Julius Cæsar named the city of Florence, was a direct ancestor, is not quite apparent; but as

this hero is brought into the story without rhyme or reason, it may be permitted to us to believe that this is the purpose of his introduction. Enough, however, for all reasonable use are the three generations of immediate progenitors, who are more easily identified. Cristofano, the first of these, was sent to Florence by his family from the Val d'Ambra, in consequence of a quarrel between him and the son of a neighbouring house, which threatened to involve both families. The blood of Cellini thus came hot to Florence, with all the choleric quality which descended to Cristofano's great-grandson. Giovanni, the father of Benvenuto, seems to have been of milder mould. He was a great musician, a good artist, and a disinterested lover, as the following pretty story proves. Next door to the Cellini in Via Chiara, *vicino a muro*, wall to wall, lived a certain Stefano Granacci, with many fair daughters, and among them one, Elisabetta by name, who took young Giovanni's heart. When the youth's sentiments became known, "as the two fathers, from their close neighbourhood, knew each other well, it was easy to conclude the alliance;" but first there was a conversation about the *dot*—that most necessary preliminary. Ser Andrea, on the one side, boasted of his son that he was the best youth in all Florence—nay, in Italy—and worthy of the best-dowered bride; to which Ser Stefano replied, with amiable yet slightly sarcastic acquiescence, "Thou art right a thousand times: but I have five girls, and many sons besides; and, reckoning all things, this and that is as far as I can go." Young Giovanni, with the impatience of a lover, had been listening unseen; and, mild as he was for a Cellini, he was not

without something of the family vivacity. He sprang out of his hiding-place while the old men talked, and broke in upon their negotiations. "Oh, my father," he cried, "it is the girl I love and long for, and not their money. Woe to him who would make himself with his wife's fortune! If it is true, as you have boasted, that I am good for something, cannot I provide for my wife and satisfy her needs with less money than you ask? I give you to wit that it is the girl that is my desire, and the money yours." At this Andrea, who was "a little odd," *un po' bizzarretto*, like the rest of them, drew back in high dudgeon. "But a few days after, Giovanni brought home his bride, and asked no fortune with her." This way of making a marriage was no doubt deeply ridiculous, not to say wicked, to the two keen old Florentines, whom one can see in their doorways in the cool of the evening, settling down to a comfortable struggle over the settlements, so to speak, when the hot-headed youngster broke in with his folly, thinking of nothing but Elisabetta. Ser Andrea, the *bizzarretto*, choleric like his race, flings off in a fury; but Stefano, more wise, seeing his own advantage, laughs in his sleeve, and lets the young couple have their way. With five girls to provide for, he was no doubt well pleased to marry one without a *dot*; and thus a world of warm human passion, generous love, and hot temper, and wary calculation, comes out before us at a word.

In an equally pretty scene the name of the great Benvenuto is accounted for. Madonna Elisabetta had no children for eighteen years, though very desirous of that doubtful blessing. After that time they came in quick succession. Her eldest child was a girl, and by

various signs she had made up her mind that the second would be a girl too. The very name was decided upon. She was to be Reparata, *per rifare la madre di mia madre*. The nurse, however,

"Who knew that they looked for a girl, when she had washed the *creatura* and wrapped it in beautiful white clothes, came softly (*cheta cheta*) to Giovanni, my father, and said, 'I bring a beautiful present which you don't expect.' My father, who was a true philosopher, was pacing about the room; he said, 'Whatever God sends me is always dear to me,' and, opening the coverings, saw the unexpected boy; then, joining his palms, he raised them and his eyes to God, and said, 'Lord, I thank Thee with all my heart. This one is very dear to me, and very welcome (*e sia il Benvenuto*).' All who were present joyfully asked him what name he would give me. Giovanni made them no answer but this, '*E sia il Benvenuto*;' and this accordingly was the name given me in holy baptism, and which I have lived to bear with the grace of God."

Benvenuto does not dwell much upon his childhood; but one incident of it is often quoted. "When I was about five," he says, "my father was 'in a little room where the great wash had been going on, and where there was a good fire of oak-wood. Giovanni, with a violin on his arm, was playing and singing, according to his custom, beside the fire. It was very cold, and looking at the fire, he saw by accident in the midst of the hottest glow a little animal like a lizard playing in the flames. As soon as he perceived what it was, he called my sister and me, and showing it to us children, gave me a great cuff, at which I immediately began to cry. He soothed me gently, saying to me, 'My dear little son, I have done this not for a punishment, but to make thee remember that this lizard thou hast seen in the fire is a salamander, which has never been

seen by any one before, so far as can be known with certainty ;' and saying this, he kissed me and gave me a few pennies." This wonderful story is not supported by any further testimony, and must be taken on Benvenuto's word.

The excellent father who thus lost no opportunity of instructing his child, was not only excellent in architecture, which was his hereditary profession, but also a great musician and maker of musical instruments. "My father made organs with wonderful pipes of wood, and cymbals, the best and most beautiful that had ever been seen, violins, lutes, and beautiful harps." It was not wonderful, then, that he should have set his heart upon making a musician of his boy—who was taught to play the flute and to sing from his earliest years, though much against the urchin's will. Giovanni himself became one of the band of the Signoria, until he was withdrawn from it by his patron, Lorenzo de Medici, who thought he gave too much of his time to this art, and neglected his other gifts. "The greatest desire he had in the world concerning me," says Benvenuto, "was, that I should become a great musician, and the greatest annoyance that I had was, when he talked to me on this subject, saying that if I would, I had so much talent for it, that I should be the first man in the world." Then follows a curious little scene, in which old Florence once more opens before us. Great things were going on then, of which the son of the architect-musician gives no sign. Savonarola from San Marco was keeping the city in holy subjection, *quando Piero ne fu cacciato*, at the time when Piero, the son of Lorenzo de Medici, was driven out of Florence. The great Dominican might but just have gone out of the hall in

the palace of the Signoria when Giovanni, with his little boy on his shoulder, went in with the band, to play before the new dignitaries who had succeeded Piero. The Medici ruler had been succeeded by the Magnifico Piero Soderini, "who knew the marvellous genius of my father," Benvenuto says:—

"At this time I was of tender years, and my father carried me in on his shoulder, and made me play the flute and take soprano parts with the musicians of the palace, before the Signoria, with a little badge round my neck. The Gonfaloniere, who was the said Soderini, took great pleasure in hearing me chatter, and gave me sweetmeats, and said to my father, 'Messer Giovanni, teach him your other beautiful arts as well as music.' To which my father replied, 'I do not wish him to do anything but play and compose music ; for in that profession I believe I can make him the first in the world, if God spares him.' To these words one of the old Signori replied, 'Ah, Messer Giovanni, do what the Gonfaloniere bids you. Why should he never be anything better than a fiddler?' When these words were told to me, I entreated my father to allow me to draw so many hours a day, and all the rest I would play to satisfy him. 'Then playing is no pleasure to thee?' he said. To which I answered No, since it appeared to me a vile art in comparison with that which I had in my head. My good father, in despair, put me into the shop of the father of the Cavaliere Bandinello, a goldsmith in Pinzi di Monte ; but when I had been there a few days, he took me away again, not being able to live without me. And so, very discontented, I went on with my music till I was fifteen."

This shows, oddly enough, that in the very country of music, from whence all our earliest traditions on the subject come, to be a good fiddler was not considered a very high aim for a young man's ambition. In those days the active citizenship of all, and the impulse of creation in art which was so

richly and largely diffused throughout Italy, made the ideal of existence itself more manly; and the musician was necessarily an appendage of a court, a part of the pomp of state, which the stern Republic hated. There was no place for him save in the luxurious court of a Medici, or amid the vicious and elegant society of the princes of the Church. The Florentine Magnificos were as intolerant of such a profession for a likely lad as any old woman in a Scotch village, to whom the blind fiddler is the highest representative of the art.

Benvenuto was saved from this fate in consequence of his father's loss, by misadventure, of his place in the band; but the struggle was long between the wishes of the father and son. He made such progress in the art he loved, however, when permitted to work at it, that "in a few months" he had taken his place among the best of the young workmen, and began to earn something by his labour. "But I did not fail on this account to please my good father, playing the flute or cornet to him; and every time he heard me he shed tears and sighed deeply." Youth came rapidly to maturity in those stirring days, under the high pressure of a life so exciting and full of incident as that which was compressed within those narrow streets, where from time to time the old *Vacca* lowed—that is to say, the big bell rang from the tower of Palazzo Vecchio—and every man and boy with a sword within reach, from all the workshops and busy hives of industry, grasped at the ready weapon, and rushed out to see what bloodshed was to be done, what government upset, between two strokes of the brush

or blows of the chisel. Here is an instance of the precocity of these fierce little Florentines:—

"My brother, younger than myself by two years, a very bold and hot-headed boy (who was then about fourteen, and I two years older), one Sunday, between the Porta San Gallo and the Porta Pinti, got into a quarrel with a youth of twenty, sword in hand, and pressed him so closely that he gave him a severe wound, and was proceeding further; * but a great crowd had gathered, among which were many friends of his antagonist, who, when they saw things going badly for their friend, began to throw stones, one of which struck my poor young brother on the head, so that he fell down as if dead. I, who happened to be present, though without either friends or arms, called out to my brother to withdraw, as he had done enough. As soon as he fell down, I rushed to him, and, seizing his sword, placed myself in front of him, against many swords and stones lifted against me—nor ever left my brother till some brave soldiers came from the Porta San Gallo and saved me from the crowd, wondering much to find such courage in one so young. I then took my brother home for dead: and it was no easy matter to bring him to himself. When he was cured, the Eight, who had already sentenced our adversaries to years of imprisonment, banished us for six months outside the circuit of ten miles from Florence. I said to my brother, 'Come with me:' and thus we took leave of our poor father, who, instead of giving us money, which he did not possess, gave us his blessing."

This was an early beginning of the "sturt and strife" in which the young artisan spent his days. Cecchino, the fierce little exile of fourteen, who had all but finished his adversary, was afterwards a soldier under the famous Giovanni dalle Bande Neri, whose statue now stands on the Lung' Arno, with the most magnificent of inscriptions, for

* The quiet simplicity of this expression, "*seguiva più oltre*," is very suggestive.

all the world to see. Poor Giovanni Cellini was no more successful with his second son than with Benvenuto. He intended Cecchino to be a man of learning and a lawyer; but the young swordsman would hear of no profession but that of arms. He was killed finally in another street-fray in Rome.

In the meantime our young goldsmith, sixteen, but already one of the *migliori giovani dell' arte*, easily found occupation in Siena, whither he fled when this first check in his career took place. He lived and worked there, residing in the house of his kind master, for several months, his brother living with him. "But," says Benvenuto, "though he had begun to study Latin, he was still so young that he had not yet tasted the sweetness of virtue, and did nothing but wander about amusing himself." They were finally restored to their home by the intercession of Cardinal de' Medici, afterwards Pope Clement. The Cellini were of the Medicean faction, and always fitfully patronised by the members of that house. But our fiery youth was soon on the road again. Some time after this, Cecchino, being a handsome fellow, and the pet of the household, came home on a visit, when his elder brother was absent, and apparently coaxed his sisters (though they were *buone et oneste*) to give him some new and fine clothes, a coat and cloak, which belonged to Benvenuto. When the elder returned and found his fine clothes gone, he was very angry, and not much mollified by his father's mild philosophy on the subject, and pious reminder that God Himself had bidden those who have to give to those who have not; and in a blaze of wrath he took all the clothes and money that remained to him—the *povero resto*—and left his father's house, not knowing

whither he was going. This time, however, he went no farther than Pisa, where he found another kind master, and plenty of work, and where he got rid altogether of the music which was such a burden to him. When at last he let his father know where he was, poor Giovanni—gentle, futile personage—wrote entreating him to come home; but in the meantime reminded him of his flute, and begged him not to forget an art which had been taught him with so much pains. "At this all desire to return home left my mind," says Benvenuto, "so much I detested that wretched music; and I seemed to be in Paradise for all that year in Pisa, where I never touched an instrument." But he could not convince his father of this rooted dislike. When he went home at last, he was seized with an illness, during which he was most tenderly cared for by his family, but not without ulterior motives: "My father, with great love and kindness, nursed and cured me, telling me continually that it seemed a thousand years to him till I should be well, that he might hear me play." Nothing overcame the persistence of this excellent fanatic, whose weak and tearful obstinacy has a comic side to it, besides furnishing a "lesson to fathers" which many would do well to note.

"While he talked to me of playing," Benvenuto continues, "holding his finger on my pulse—for he had some knowledge of medicine and of Latin—he felt so great an irregularity in the said pulse whenever he spoke of music, that he was frightened, and left me weeping. When I saw how unhappy he was, I told one of my sisters to fetch me a flute, which, as it was the least fatiguing instrument, I could play without much disturbance; and this I did with such excellent adjustment of the hands and voice,

that my father, coming in suddenly, gave me many blessings, telling me that in the time of my absence from him I had made great progress, and entreated me to carry it on, and not to lose so fine a talent."

The end of this struggle, however, was that Benvenuto, when he grew a man, began also to find a charm in music, and consented to play in the Pope's band, and even to accept a regular place in it, to the great contentment of his father; so that Giovanni got a little satisfaction in his favourite fancy at the last.

Benvenuto was now at the age when every new suggestion moved him. At one time he was about to set out for England with Torrigiani, the big bully who broke Michelangelo's nose; until the braggard chose to tell the story of that assault, when Benvenuto turned from him with generous indignation and disgust. "These words raised such horror in me—for I had constantly in my sight the works of the divine Michelangelo—that not only I gave up all thought of going to England with him, but I could not endure the sight of him." At another time a quarrel about the everlasting flute set the youth off in hot haste upon his travels in company with a wood-carver called Tasso, who had quarrelled with his mother on some equally important subject. Parents must have been kept in good subjection in Florence in those days. On this occasion Benvenuto went to Rome, where he worked admirably as usual, and as usual became the subject of a quarrel between two of his masters for his invaluable services. He returned to Florence in two years, a full-grown man, and as touchy and hot-headed a person as ever trod the pavements of that stormful city; and being now able to work for

himself, and to invent some charming novelties of ornament which had not occurred to his old masters and teachers, he raised a great deal of envy and opposition in the trade, and among his rival workmen. Benvenuto, on his side, was as ready with his tongue as with his sword; and once more the old city, with its narrow streets, its intense and continual rivalries, its feuds and deadly quarrels between houses facing each other, and enemies seen every day and hour, appears to us like a picture. "I shook myself free of them all, and considered them no better than thieves and wretches," says the young goldsmith; and with these laudable sentiments in his mind, it was not long before he got into an open quarrel. His enemies threatened to make him repent his bold words; and he who "did not know what colour fear was," scorned their menaces.

"One day I was leaning against the shop of one of them, when he called to me, and began to reproach and defy me,—to whom I answered, that if they had behaved as they ought to me, I should have called them honest men; but as the contrary had been the case, they should blame themselves, and not me. While I stood talking, one of them, called Gherardo Guasconti, their cousin, probably by consent with them, seeing an ass coming along the streets laden with bricks, pushed it violently against me, so that it hurt me much. Turning round suddenly upon him, and seeing him laugh, I gave him such a blow on the temple that he fell down like a dead man. Then I turned to his family and cried, 'This is how I treat cowardly thieves like you;' and as they seemed inclined to make a disturbance (*fare alcuna dimostrazione*), because they were many, I, flaming up, put my hand on a little knife I wore, saying, 'Whoever goes out of this shop had better run for a confessor, for a doctor will be unnecessary.' They were so alarmed by this, that not one of them stirred to help their kinsman."

These were the very same strait streets, each a narrow thread of way between two rugged piles of Tuscan masonry, where Dante saw the young cavalier turn out his toes from his stirrups as he rode along, to push the passengers against the wall. Benvenuto had no business there: he had come to flout his adversaries, leaning against the front of their shop, and no doubt the clatter of the patient ass's hoofs had been drowned in the noisy wrangle. Nor would any bystander take much notice of Gherardo lying on the stony pavement, knocked down so cleverly, or think it unnatural that the *coltello* should, if need was, be brought into play. Benvenuto was called before the Eight for this little amusement of his mid-day leisure, and declared that he had only given a *ceffata*, a slap with the open hand, to his opponent: an excuse which called forth an amusing discussion upon certain intricacies of Florentine law, but ended with something like a binding over to keep the peace. Benvenuto, furious, summoned a kinsman to be bail for him, who refused the responsibility: "at which I was indignant, and swelling with rage like an asp, resolved to do something desperate,"—"for," says the pious historian, "one's star does not so much incline as force one's fate." He waited in the audience-chamber where the Eight had laughed at his rage, until all had gone away to dinner, magistrates and officials, and the parties on the other side, who had got their securities apparently more easily than he. Then seeing that nobody was watching him, "inflamed with rage," he rushed out of the Palazzo, ran to his shop to get a weapon, and then with a bound was in the house of his enemies.

"They were at table, and the young fellow Gherardo, who was at the bottom

of the whole matter, got up to meet me; to whom I gave a stab in the breast which pierced his coat and doublet to his linen, without touching his skin or doing him any harm whatever. The jar of my hand and the sound of the cloth pierced by the knife, and his sudden fall prostrated by fear, making me suppose that I had done him great harm, I cried, 'Oh, traitors! to-day I shall kill you all.' The father, mother, and sisters all thinking the day of judgment had come, threw themselves on their knees, and cried for mercy with all their might; and seeing that nobody made any resistance, and that the young man lay stretched out like one dead, it seemed beneath me to touch them further. I rushed furiously up the stair, and reaching the street, found all the rest of the kindred, more than twelve in number, armed, one with a spade, one with a great bar of iron, others with hammers, anvils, and sticks. I plunged among them like a mad bull, threw four or five of them to the ground, and fell with them, wielding my dagger on every side. Those who remained afoot showered down blows upon me with both hands, with their sticks and hammers; but God being once more pitiful, procured that neither they nor I did any hurt with our blows. My cap remained in their hands, and was taken possession of by some of my adversaries who had fled at first, but who now pierced it with their weapons; and afterwards examining their dead and wounded, found that no one was any the worse."

This violent but harmless encounter is no doubt a good specimen of the tumults that arose at every chance, and which probably for the most part were equally innocent,—not much more serious than a football "scrimmage," though with an accompaniment of dagger and *coltello*, which adds dignity, if it does not greatly increase the danger. Benvenuto, however, rushed away from the scene of the conflict, in the full and happy conviction that he had slain two or three of his enemies, and running against a monk on the way, appealed to him for sanctuary.

"This good friar told me to fear nothing; for if I had done the greatest crimes in the world, I should be perfectly safe in his little cell." Thus all that the Eight could do was to vex the soul of poor Giovanni, the father of the young reprobate, who stood up manfully for his son; and to fulminate a sort of anathema against Benvenuto, denouncing pains and penalties of the severest kind upon whomsoever should give him shelter. That same day he was sent away from Florence, his father and one of his friends conveying to him a sword and a coat of mail. "Oh, my good son," cried his father, after many tears and blessings, "with these in your hands you must live or die." Thus equipped, and covering his mail with a monk's habit, he escaped out of the city, and began in earnest his wild and violent career.

We must not linger upon the earlier portion of Benvenuto's sojourn in Rome—during which he was as usual in hot-water with a number of jealous competitors, but petted and made much of by the patrons who contended with each other to get a vase made or a jewel set by the Florentine artist; but who, when it came to the question of payment, were apt to get out of harmony too. The part he played during the siege of Rome is, however, more important than these small matters, of which we hear so much throughout his life. He had already a host of acquaintances, had become one of Pope Clement's musicians, and had been employed by him, and many of the great personages in Rome, in important works of art, when, on one dreadful morning of May 1527, the Constable of Bourbon, with 40,000 men, appeared suddenly under the walls. The roving Florentine, always in the centre of all that was going on, had already got together a band

of fifty young men, "at the time of the Colonnas," in the previous autumn, though of his action then he affords us no details. When, however, the news of this new and more formidable invasion ran through all the *bottegas*, Alessandro del Bene entreated Benvenuto to accompany him to the walls, which he did with one or two companions. There the sight of the "marvellous army" outside, and of the many dead within, startled even those hot-headed youths. The confusion, the terrible odds, the *molti giovini*, young recruits and volunteers who were being sacrificed on the walls, and the hopeless want of means for defence—for Pope Clement, vacillating and uncertain, had disbanded his troops—gave the young men so strong an impression of hopelessness, that their hearts failed them. "There is no remedy in the world," even Benvenuto cried out; "but since you have brought me here," he adds, to Lessandro, *spavento*, in a panic, who has just turned to go back,—"since you have brought me here, let us do one act of manhood." "I then aimed with my arquebuse," he says, "at a point where the battle raged hotly, and where there was something in the middle raised over the heads of the rest; but who it was, and whether on horseback or on foot, I was not able to discern. Turning to Lessandro and Cecchino, I made them also fire their muskets; and when we had made two shots, I advanced cautiously behind the wall, and seeing in the distance an extraordinary tumult, discovered that our bullets had killed Bourbon—for he it was who had been raised above the others, as I afterwards understood." After this wonderful stroke the three left the walls, and hurrying through the streets, reached with great difficulty the gates of the Castle of St Angelo, which they entered in haste,

the enemy being already in the town, so close behind them as to be almost "on their shoulders." The portcullis was down, and it was all the little party could do to get within this last citadel of Rome. Here Benvenuto, being in the Pope's service, was immediately laid hands upon and set to work; and as long as the siege lasted—a whole month—remained one of the most vigorous defenders of the stronghold. A more striking picture than that he gives us could scarcely be. From the heights on which he now stood, all Rome lay under the eyes of the defenders, with Bourbon's mercenaries pouring into the rich and defenceless city.

"As soon as I found myself within the walls I approached the nearest guns, which were served by a bombardier called Giuliano, a Florentine. This Giuliano looking out from the battlement saw his poor house sacked, and his wife and children ill-treated. He dared not fire his guns lest he should complete the destruction of those belonging to him, but throwing the match on the ground, with a great cry, tore his hair, as did many others of the gunners. I, who had no such passion to restrain me, seized one of these matches, and with the aid of other bystanders, directing the guns where I saw there was need, cleared off many of the enemy: if I had not done this, the besiegers who entered the city that morning would have pushed on to the Castle; and it is possible that they might have made an easy conquest of it, since the artillery did nothing against them. I went on firing; for which many cardinals and lords blessed me, and praised my great courage, which emboldened me still more, and enabled me to do things beyond my strength: suffice it to say that I was the means of saving the Castle that morning, and of rousing the other gunners to do their duty. . . . I, who often was more inclined to this profession of arms than to my own, took it up with so much goodwill that I did it better than my own trade. When night fell, and the ene-

my had entered Rome, we who were in the Castle, especially I, who always took delight in seeing anything that was new, stood gazing at this wonderful novelty, and the fires which burned everywhere—things which those in other places could neither see nor imagine."

These fierce lights glowing all over the miserable city, the eager spectators gazing down upon them—few with hearts so disengaged and free to remark upon the *inistimabile novità* as the Florentine stranger who had no home to be outraged in the streets below—with all the smoke and flame and cries of the sufferers rising upwards, and the unhappy gunners afraid to fire at their enemies lest they should complete the ruin of their friends,—what a sight for curious eyes! The defenders shut up in their little stronghold between heaven and earth, unable to aid the helpless crowds, their own families and friends, who were below, compelled to look on at their houses burning, their goods destroyed, and to imagine more miseries still which they could not see, present to us as cruel a glimpse of human anguish as it is possible to imagine. But there was no such anguish in Benvenuto. If he had a regretful thought of his trinkets, or the silver vase he was making for that Spanish bishop, these were not sharp enough to go to his heart: and he flew at the guns with an energy in which there was positive pleasure, and found himself master of the occasion, and was inspired by all the plaudits he received. To have killed the commander of the opposing army by that chance shot from the city-walls—to have saved St Angelo from the first rush of the invaders, by means of that match smouldering on the ground which had fallen from poor Giuliano's convulsed fingers,—what a

triumph for the young fellow! Amid all the conflagrations and the miseries, and that hoarse roar of anguish and tumult rising to the skies, here was one man at least whose pulses were dancing with excitement, and curiosity, and pleasure—who felt he was doing this new thing better even than his own business, and was the hero of the moment, besides the gratification of that *inistimabile novità*.

The ordinary dangers of the siege, however, were straightforward, and more easily dealt with than the perils involved in the company of so many powerful personages inside the strict enclosure of the castle walls. Various cardinals, in their red *berrettas*, would come and talk to Benvenuto, affording an excellent mark to the besiegers, until he had to complain of them, and get them confined to another part of the stronghold, thereby earning their ill-will afterwards. On another occasion he seems to have been fairly frightened by the threat of private vengeance. One of the captains of the fortress, Orazio Baglioni, pointed out to him a great commotion below in a tavern bearing the sign of the Sun, where apparently some persons of importance were collected, and suggested that he should direct his gun to that spot. Benvenuto explained that he should already have done so, but that a barrellful of stones stood so near the mouth of the cannon, that the discharge would inevitably throw it down upon the heads of the people in the lower line of the defence. The captain, impatient, called out to him to lose no time—if the Pope himself were below, *manco male*, the less harm—"Fire! fire!" he cried. Benvenuto fired accordingly, doing great damage at the sign of the Sun: but upsetting the stones, according to his own prevision, nearly on the heads

of Cardinal Farnese and Jacopo Salviati—the latter being the man who had persuaded Pope Clement to disband his army, and was considered by all to be the cause of their present danger. These worthies were quarrelling furiously—threatening each other with word and fist; and it was the agility of their rage which saved them from destruction. The captain, however, frightened for the consequences to himself, rushed down from the height of the great round donjon to the lower circle to see what harm was done; while Benvenuto, cautiously peeping from behind the wall, heard the bystanders exclaiming that the gunner who had done this should be made an end of. Now Benvenuto was always warmly aware that though there might be little harm done by crushing a pope, the life of the great Cellini was a thing which the world could not spare: he took his measures of self-defence without a moment's delay.

"I turned two of the small guns towards the stair with a resolute mind, determined to fire upon the first comers. Certain servants of Cardinal Farnese, sent by their master to punish me, were the first to appear, and I, advancing with the lighted match in my hand, called out to some of them whom I knew—'O rascals, if you do not take yourselves out of that, if you attempt to come up by these steps, I have here two falconets ready, and I will blow you to powder. Go and tell the cardinal that I acted under orders,—that I meant no harm to the priests, but to defend them.' They disappeared, and Signor Orazio (he who had given Benvenuto the order to fire) came running up. When I called to him to stand back or I would fire upon him, though I knew very well who he was, he stopped short, not without alarm, calling out, 'Benvenuto, I am thy friend.' To whom I replied, 'Signor, come by yourself, and you may come as you please.' This gentleman, however, was extremely proud, and without advancing, said angrily,

‘I have a great mind not to come at all, and to change my mind altogether about you.’ To this I replied, that as anxious as I was to defend others, so also was I ready to defend myself when necessary. He then said that he came alone; but as he approached me with a changed countenance, I put my hand on my sword and kept a watchful eye upon him. At this he began to laugh, and his colour returning, said to me pleasantly, ‘Benvenuto mio, I wish you nothing but good, and will prove it when I have occasion. Would to God that you had killed those two wretches, one of whom has done so much harm already, and the other may do yet more!’ He then begged me not to say that he was with me when I fired, and encouraged me to have no fear of any consequences. This affair made a great noise, and was long remembered. I have no desire to say more about it—enough that I had to revenge my father upon Messer Jacopo Salviata, who had done us a thousand bad turns. At all events, I gave him a great fright. As for the Farnese, I say nothing, since it will be seen hereafter what a good thing it would have been had I killed him.”

These last incautious words make it more than probable that Benvenuto was very well aware upon whose heads he was discharging that bucketful of stones. Nor can there be much doubt that Signor Orazio, though he was so anxious to exonerate himself, was not without certain benevolent intentions—he who thought it would be *manco male*, no great harm, if the Pope himself were below—towards the *due ribaldi* who were so conveniently assailable within, as well as to the tavern of the Sun, with all its foreign commanders, outside the walls.

This extraordinary break in the artist's career lasted a month, during which it is his delight to record the number of occasions on which he carried slaughter to the besiegers. “There never passed a day,”

he says, “that I did not kill some of the enemy outside.” Once, while the Pope was looking on, he directed his gun at a man in rose-colour at a great distance, who happened to be one of Clement's special aversions. Though it was so far off from the *rotondo* of St Angelo to the field in which this gorgeous personage was, that the gunner had no hope of hitting him, he nevertheless made the attempt for love, and by way of passing the time. By an extraordinary chance the shot hit upon the sword which the victim held before him “in a certain Spanish fashion of his,” and thus his own weapon cut him through the body “in two pieces.” The Pope was delighted, as may be supposed, with this miraculous and entertaining blow, and called for the gunner, who knelt down before him and asked pardon for this and all the other homicides he had performed, which Pope Clement gave, liberally adding an absolution for all that might yet happen in the same way in the cause of Holy Church. But our space forbids us to follow the record too closely; nor can the hero himself put everything down. “My drawing, and my fine studies, and my beautiful performance of music, all now,” says Benvenuto, “were in the rear of the guns; and if I had to tell every particular of the fine things I did in that infernal cruelty, I should make the world wonder.” However, even amid the smoke and fire, there was something else for a skilful artificer and honest Florentine retainer of the Medici to do. One day Benvenuto was sent for to the Pope's private apartment; and there, shut up with Clement and a single attendant, he undid out of their settings all the jewels appertaining to the apostolical crown, wrapping each separately in paper, and sewing them into the skirts of the Pope's

robes and those of his companion: after which Benvenuto carried off the gold to melt it down in order to pay the soldiers with the proceeds. He had to make an impromptu furnace up upon the Angelo battlement where his post was. "While the furnace worked I was continually on the watch how I could do most harm to the enemy"—and as, *poco a poco*, the gold ran liquid into his mould, the fierce artisan launched, as he could, now and then, an old-fashioned javelin at the besiegers. It is evident that throughout this whole bloody and terrible time he was in his element, and enjoyed his fierce vigil up among those clouds of horror and dismay which enveloped Rome.

When, however, the negotiations with the imperialists were on the eve of completion, his over-energy nearly wrecked them altogether. He could not resist the temptation of firing a farewell salvo into the inn where the Prince of Orange was lying wounded—as he asserts, by Benvenuto's own hand—and thus brought down upon himself the wrath of Cardinal Orsini, "who would have had me hanged, or otherwise put to death," says Benvenuto, "but the Pope took my part." This was about all the thanks he got for his wonderful exertions,—they did not hang him. But we know nothing parallel to the picture he has left us both of himself and his surroundings at this extraordinary moment. The determined rebel, who turned his gun on the steps that led to his battery in his own defence, who was nearly hanged high on that *rotondo* at the end, who all but killed the future pope, and made himself as many enemies within as he slaughtered without—yet all the time was no soldier, but a goldsmith, the most exquisite workman of his day, a court musician, a wandering journeyman in art

—is such a figure as the world has never seen since. It may be doubtful whether it were he who shot the Constable of Bourbon and the Prince of Orange, and saved the citadel of Rome; but it is not the least doubtful that there he stands, a wild young pagan Mars and god of battle, with his eyes everywhere and his match in his hand, ready to *dar fuoco* at a moment's notice; or in his little furnace stirring the molten gold with one hand, discharging any missile he can get hold of with the other, fierce and resolute for Holy Church, but little concerned should a chance shot blow up a cardinal, or, *manco male*, the Pope himself.

We need not follow his wanderings after this, through Florence and Mantua, till we find him again in Rome. His father, old Giovanni, who had been so anxious to confine his boy to the peaceful art of music, received him safe from the siege, and enriched with "a good quantity of crowns gained in the war," with such a passion of joy that he almost died of it; but hearing that Benvenuto had been appointed captain in the Florentine army, he took fright and sent him off hastily to Mantua, entreating him to have nothing to do with war. This is the last time the anxious father appears in his son's story. When Benvenuto passed through Florence on his way to Rome, he went as usual to the familiar door, where he was met, not by the old man with his fond remonstrances, his terrors and persistent prejudice, but by a *gobba arrabbiata*, a deformed and scolding old woman, who drove him away with abuse; when he was informed by a gentler neighbour that old Giovanni and the elder sister, Cosa, who was an Ursuline nun, and indeed all the family, were dead of the plague—a dismal medie-

val incident. However, the end even of this is less tragical than the beginning. Wandering, sadly enough no doubt, through the streets, Benvenuto found his brother, the hero of his first boyish brawl, who informed him that Liparata, their younger sister, was still living, and married a second time. To her house the brothers accordingly went, and were received with such transports of joy by Liparata, who believed Benvenuto to be dead, that her new husband could scarcely be persuaded he was her brother only. "Having wept a little for our father and sister, for her husband and little boy," says Benvenuto, "orders were given for supper, and all the rest of the evening we talked no more of the dead, but maintained a conversation more suitable for a marriage, and thus gaily and with much pleasure finished our supper." This junction of regret for the past with philosophical acceptance of any good the present may bring, is delightfully Italian and natural. Cecchino, the younger brother, took great pride in making it known that he had found Liparata this new marriage without any absurd delay.

It was at this time that Benvenuto seems to have had most intercourse with Michelangelo, who came to see him while he worked, and inspired him with new life. "He praised my work so much that my eagerness to do well increased beyond measure." He is the divine Michelangelo, the *eccellentissimo*, the *maraviglioso*, to the young artist; and it was no wonder that Benvenuto was excited by his applause. His stay in Florence, however, was short; and he is no sooner in Rome than a great work is put into his hands—no less than the making of a button to fasten the Pope's cope, a round ornament, "the third part

of a *braccio*," about eight inches in size. Clement, with the taste of a Medici, notwithstanding all that had happened to him, was anxious that this piece of work should be completed quickly, "because I should like myself to enjoy it a little while." This button or brooch was to bear a "Dio Padre" in relief, and to be set with a great diamond and other jewels. "I," cries Benvenuto, "went off like a spindle" on receiving this commission—set all a-whirl, his fancy and mind and his very legs quivering with eagerness to carry him to work.

Through this great undertaking, however, he is plunged instantly into fresh conflicts. Other and more experienced jewellers than he—old favourites with the Pope, men far better known than this little whippersnapper of a Florentine, whose yeoman's service on the Castle walls, they perhaps thought, and a little clanship on the part of the Medicean Pope, more than any qualities of his own, had got him the commission—set themselves instantly in his way. One Micheletto or Michelino (who was a great artist in gem-cutting, and a most intelligent jeweller), with Pompeo, a Milanese, who was a great favourite with the Pope, and related to one of his attendants, were the leaders of the plot against him. They besieged the ante-chambers, as the imperialists, a little while before, had besieged St Angelo, urging their own superior competence to undertake this great work, and the feebleness of Benvenuto. Pope Clement, knowing his man, was not to be dissuaded from his choice; but the others managed to introduce themselves and their designs when he came with his wax model to show to the Pope. Benvenuto stood aside with malicious satisfaction while they all showed their drawings, knowing that an artist

without practical experience in the art of setting jewels would not have any success in it, any more than a jeweller, however clever, with an imperfect knowledge of the art of design. The Pope, who was of *bonissimo ingegno* in these matters—a Medici, no need to say more—cast them contemptuously away after looking over a few of them, and called to the mischievous Florentine, laughing in his sleeve in the corner, “Let us look a little at thy model, Benvenuto.” Needless to say that when Benvenuto opened his little box, “a splendour seemed to come out of it which lighted up the eyes of the Pope,” and he cried out loudly, “If I had done it myself, it could not have been more exactly what I wanted.” Then he called all the courtiers about him to admire it, and to compare it with the other designs,—critics who, as may be imagined, agreed with his Holiness in anything he chose to say; while Benvenuto, swelling more and more with gratified pride and artist-enthusiasm, promised that in the gold it should be ten times better than in the wax. At this the courtiers ventured to cry out, with flattering sarcasm, that the young man promised too much; but one of them, “a great philosopher,” with grave Italian humour, took Benvenuto’s part. “The fine physiognomy and bodily symmetry of this youth make me believe that he will do all he says, and even more,” said this courtly spectator. Benvenuto was too vain and too simple by far to divine the smile that would flash from eye to eye, but took it all with the profoundest seriousness, and a happy sense that he was a handsome fellow as well as the greatest artist (almost) of his day. He is a little weak in his spelling, and says *finusumia* instead of *fisonomia*. But very likely the noble humourist would have

done the same; and thus the plot of the rival *orefice* came for the moment to an end.

This, however, was only for the moment. In the meantime the Pope caressed him greatly, and intrusted several other great commissions to his hands. He commissioned him to make a chalice, the most splendid ever thought of, employed him on his coins, and gave him an appointment as master of the mint, with a salary of six gold crowns a month. When it unfortunately happened to him that he was obliged to kill the musketeer who had killed his brother, our roystering friend Cecchino, in a street brawl—a necessity which pressed so hardly upon him that “it took away my sleep and my appetite, and threw me into evil ways,” until the vengeance was accomplished—Pope Clement saved him from all risk of punishment, throwing over him the shield of his patronage. Benvenuto, however, was bound to get into hot-water somehow with all his employers; and some petulance of his about the great chalice which he was commanded to make, and which he would not finish or produce when called for, brought Pompeo, his enemy, once more upon the field. This schemer, who was against the Florentine on national grounds as well as by the proverbial envy of “two of a trade,” persuaded the Pope to take Benvenuto’s office from him, and then to insist upon seeing the chalice, finished or unfinished. So serious did the matter grow, that the artist was taken into custody, and all sorts of penalties were threatened. No less a person than the Governor of Rome, in whose custody he was, went to the Pope to ascertain his final fate, leaving Benvenuto, irritated yet alarmed, “walking about in the hall” to await their return, upon which ensued the following curious scene:—

“As soon as the governor appeared with the procurator, he called me to him, and said, ‘Benvenuto, I am sorry to come back with such a commission as I have received: either you must produce your work at once, or it will be worse for you.’ Then I answered, ‘That having never supposed up to that moment that a Vicar of Christ could do an injustice, I would not believe it till I saw it; but that now he (the governor) must act according to his orders.’ Then the governor replied: ‘I have two other words to say to thee on the part of the Pope, after which I will execute my orders. The Pope bids you bring me the work, and that I should see it packed in a box and sealed up, and then carry it to him, he promising on his faith not to break a single seal, and to send it back to you at once; but this he insists upon, that, on his side, he may also maintain his honour.’ To these words I replied, laughing, that I would willingly intrust him with my work in this way, for I wanted to be able to say what sort of thing the faith of a pope was; then sending for my work, I sealed it up as he directed, and gave it to him. The governor took the box, and delivered it over to his Holiness, who turned it round and round in his hands, and asked the governor if he had seen it. The governor replied yes, that it had been sealed up in his presence, and added that it appeared to him an admirable work. On which the Pope said, ‘Tell Benvenuto that popes have power to loose and to bind many greater things than this;’ and while he spoke these words, with little ceremony he opened the box, tearing off the cord and the seal that bound it; after which he looked at it carefully, and showed it to everybody about him. . . . Then turning to the governor, he said, ‘See if Benvenuto will give it to us; for if he will give it as it is, it shall be paid for according to the estimate of worthy men; or if he will really finish it, let him name his time, and if you can make sure that he is actually working on it, you can furnish him with whatever he requires.’ Then the governor replied, ‘Holy Father, I know the terrible character of this young man; let me have authority to give him a lecture in my own way.’ To this the Pope replied that he might use what words he pleased,

but that if he could make nothing of me, he was to tell me to carry his five hundred *scudi* (which had been given for materials) to Pompeo his jeweller. When the governor came back, he called me into his room, and with the look of a jailor, said, ‘Popes have authority to loose and bind all the world, and what they do is confirmed in heaven: here is thy work, opened and examined by his Holiness.’ Then I raised my voice, and cried, ‘I thank God that now I can say what sort of a thing is the faith of a pope!’”

The proud and high-spirited Benvenuto was not, however, to be conquered so easily. As soon as he was allowed to leave his prison, he took the five hundred *scudi* to Pompeo, who, conveying them with malicious satisfaction to the Pope, received an unexpected bad reception, and was sent back instantly to apologise to Benvenuto, and entreat him to finish the much-desired chalice for the feast of the Corpus Domini. When Pompeo, most unwillingly, carried this gracious message, he was received with equal harshness by Benvenuto, who sent him back with a haughty reply, requesting that, as his Holiness had many servants, another messenger might be found for all commissions addressed to him, if the Pope took any care for Pompeo's life. The feud thus carried on between the Pope and the artist is of the most curious kind; for while Benvenuto defied his Holiness at every turn, he was at the same time secretly working, with the greatest diligence, at his commissions, and specially at a fine medallion portrait in relief; and Clement, on his side, even while moved by gusts of passion against his favourite, always came back to him with renewed affection. The tide ran so high against Benvenuto at one time, that, moved also by some private passions of his own, he made an escapade to Naples, absenting himself for some time.

from his work and all the intrigues of the Court. Our space unfortunately will not permit us to touch upon an extraordinary scene of magic and incantations performed by night in the Colosseum by a necromancer who was a priest,—a scene which Benvenuto swears to, and which was certainly much more imposing and alarming than any feeble “manifestations” of our day. When, however, he returned by another caprice from Naples, he took his medal peaceably to Clement, and was once more received with the utmost kindness, and in greater favour than ever.

Alas! a very short time after this reconciliation Pope Clement died, and Benvenuto's good fortune in Rome came to an end. While he was in the depth of depression for the loss of his patron, Pompeo, his enemy, took every occasion to jeer at and insult him, and on one luckless day swaggered past Benvenuto's shop with a guard of ten armed men, doing everything he could to provoke him. Benvenuto's friends would have had him *metter mano*,—put hand to his sword at once,—being all ready to stand by him; but he reflected that this would bring innocent people into trouble, and refused, declaring that he was man enough to manage his own affairs, and needed no help. When they had left him, a little irritated by this speech, Benvenuto's boiling blood would no longer be still, and he darted out on the traces of his enemy, who had marched with slow defiance along the street, ostentatiously exhibiting himself and his armed defenders, and challenging the opposite faction. When Benvenuto came up to the party—

“Pompeo had gone into an apothecary's shop at the corner of the Chi-

avica, on some business of his own: but I was told he was boasting of having braved me, which was very unfortunate for him. As I arrived at the corner he came out of the shop, and his bravos opened their ranks and received him in the midst. I put my hand to a sharp little dagger I had, and forcing my way through the bravos, laid hold of him by the breast with such rapidity and certainty that none of them could interfere. As I pulled him towards me, he turned away his face in his terror, and I struck him below the ear, and then repeating my blow, at the second stroke he fell dead, which was not my intention; but as people say, blows are not bargained for.* I then took my dagger in my left hand, drew my sword with my right for the defence of my life, and thus unmolested (for the bravos all ran to the dead body, and did nothing to stop me), retired by the Strada Julia, meditating where to take refuge.”

This little accident, however, blew over for the moment, and no harm came. One cardinal after another stepped in to shelter the bold avenger of his own wrongs. Cornaro of Venice, and Cardinal Medici, upon whom he had the claim of a countryman, quarrelled who should have the care of him; even Pope Paul—that same Farnese whom Benvenuto had all but killed in the time of the siege—not only pardoned the murder of Pompeo, but ordered a safe-conduct to be made out for the security of the murderer. Only the Milanese made any attempt to avenge their countryman; but the Pope promptly put them down. “Know,” he said, “that men like Benvenuto, unique in their profession, cannot be bound by laws like ordinary persons;” for Pope Paul, too, had moneys to coin and fine things to make: a new die for a *scudo*, for instance, the *Vas Electionis*,—and could not spare, for a matter of a murder or two, so valuable a work-

* “I colpi non si danno a patti”—a proverb.

man. However, by an undercurrent, the Pope's son, Pier Luigi Farnese, was made to take up the cause of the dead Pompeo; and Rome soon became a dangerous place for Benvenuto, who rushed off with his usual precipitation, first to Venice, where he amused himself greatly, and afterwards to Florence, where he came across that tragic pair of cousins—Alessandro, the reigning Duke of Florence, one of the vilest of young debauchees, and Lorenzo, called Lorenzaccio, the apparent companion of his vices, the unhappy Italian Hamlet who afterwards killed him, and who figures as the hero of Alfred de Musset's fine play. Our artist finally returned to Rome with a safe-conduct from the Pope, and was once more employed in various great works—among others, on the cover of a book to be presented to the Emperor Charles V., to whom, on his triumphal entry into Rome, Benvenuto was sent by the Pope, and received the most gracious reception. But all these grandeurs and flatteries did not still his enemies, who continued their machinations against him after he had made another expedition, by Florence and Switzerland, as far as Paris, where he saw King Francis; but in his capricious soul he took a distaste to that Court, and left it almost immediately. Notwithstanding his safe-conduct and all the promises that lured him back, he was arrested this time when he returned to Rome, and lodged in St Angelo, in the very *rotondo* which he had so bravely defended. "This was the first time," says Benvenuto, feeling evidently that the fact was strange as well as most creditable to him, "that ever I was in prison, though I was now thirty-seven." (We may here note that his dates are very uncertain. He represents himself as having been born in the year 1500, but gives an account of having performed

before Piero Soderini in Florence immediately after his election as Gonfaloniere in 1502, besides many other discrepancies.)

The history of this imprisonment is one of the most interesting chapters in Benvenuto's life. That he made himself both enemies and friends of the hottest description wherever he went, is very evident,—but more enemies than friends. The natural arrogance of the man, and his unbounded self-opinion, which have amused and delighted so many generations of readers, had not by any means so pleasant an effect upon his contemporaries, whose tenderest toes he not only trod, but jumped, upon at every practicable occasion, whose authority he defied, and whose good opinion he only cared for when it happened to chime in with his requirements. The moment he was fairly in the hands of his persecutors, an eager crowd of rivals and slighted patrons rose around him. The old transaction at St Angelo, which has been already referred to, when his services were required by Pope Clement to unset the jewels of the Papacy, in order to melt down the gold of the settings, was brought up against him. He had confessed to Clement himself that he had appropriated the dregs of the molten gold to make up for his unpaid wages; but the present accusation, which was that of having abstracted some of the jewels, was much more serious. He met it, indeed, without any difficulty, by referring to the list of the Papal jewels, and proving that there were really none missing which could not be accounted for; but in those days the best of defences proved little when an obnoxious person was safely under lock and key. Neither in the extraordinary court of the Vatican, where all manner of intrigues were continually going on,

did it matter much that the Pope himself had compunctions, and often wished the artist safe out of those rude hands which could not set a jewel or decorate a chalice to save their lives. At first his confinement was easy enough: he was allowed to work at his art, and to walk about the battlements so familiar to him, being on his parole not to attempt to escape. But afterwards, the half-crazy governor, who was apparently a hypochondriac and monomaniac, and had fits of moral disorder, in which he believed himself to be a bat, took fright at the assertion of the bold goldsmith, who was never to be outdone in bragging, that he saw no reason why a man should not fly, and that if he himself resolved to do so, he felt sure he should succeed. On this hint his privileges were taken away, and the strictest confinement and vigilance — lest this wild man of genius should carry his suggestion out and fly away from the battlements of the *rotondo* — were substituted for the indulgence with which he had previously been treated.

Thus defied, Benvenuto at once set to work. He managed, with infinite labour, to remove the iron plates from his door, replacing the nails with wax models so exactly like them, that the most careful examination could not find out the difference; and, by keeping back the sheets which he had used when clean linen was sent to him, he accumulated a large store of long slips of strong linen, which was all he wanted for his escape. When the night came for this attempt he forced the door, and after various risks and hairbreadth 'scapes, managed to let himself down from one wall after another, notwithstanding that it was a resplendent starlight night, and at least two sentries saw the strange figure in

white doublet and hose swinging by the long white rope of linen down the perilous precipice of the walls. It was the evening after a *festa*, and perhaps the men had been merry, and were willing to let the unfortunate prisoner, shut out from all such joys, have his chance. Even at the present day the sympathies of most Italians would be more with the flying prisoner than the authorities and the law. The last wall, however, was either higher than he expected, or his force was failing him; for here, on the very threshold of freedom, he fell and fainted on the pavement below. Here he lay in his swoon for about an hour and a half, he thinks, and was brought to himself by the freshness of the dawn an hour before sunrise. He had broken his leg in the fall, and cut his head severely. The latter was a trifle; but to be left lying on the stones at the foot of a prison-wall from which he had just escaped, with a broken leg, was a circumstance apt to discourage even such a valiant soul as Cellini. He was outside the city, but close to one of the gates. Examining himself as he lay, he found that the hilt of his dagger, which he had stuck into one of his boots, had been the means of breaking his leg. He drew the knife from the scabbard, which he threw away, and with the naked dagger in his hand, crawled to the gate, which was still shut. He found, however, a great stone laid against it, which, on his knees, with the help of his dagger, the indomitable fugitive displaced, crawling through the opening into the city, and thus invading Rome, all bloody, and crippled, with his broken leg, and his naked knife, ready for anything, as strange a spectacle as those historical streets had ever seen. He had a passing fight with the dogs, the only waking inhabitants, but

they soon retreated before the fierce creature on all-fours with his dagger, and he crawled along over the rough stones on his way to the nearest church in which he could find sanctuary. The light was increasing every minute, and his danger with it. At last he met an early water-carrier with his cart, to whom he told a story of *bonnes fortunes*, and of a sudden escape from a window, such as was adapted to call forth the immediate sympathy of any amiable Roman. The water-carrier took him in his cart as far as the steps of St Peter, from whence our dauntless artist set out again "like a carp," crawling towards the house of the Duchess Margherita, the widow of Duke Alessandro of Florence, and wife of one of the Farnese, whose protection he felt assured of. The Duchess was in his debt, indeed, as he stops, all covered with blood and wounds, to tell us.* While, however, he made his painful way from the great steps, he was recognised by a servant of Cardinal Cornaro's, and carried to the house of the Venetian, where for the moment he was in safety.

Then there arose—can any one wonder?—a great commotion and discussion in Rome, where, as the day brightened and the citizens awoke, there was visible before their eyes the flying line of that long white strip of linen, still attached to the battlement, by which the prisoner had swung himself from the very foot of the angel who watches the city, to the river-bank below. Cardinal Cornaro and one of the

Pucci hurried to the Vatican to forestall all complaints, and throwing themselves at the feet of the Pope, entreated his pardon for Benvenuto. Pope Paul, between wrath and sympathy, did not know how to answer them. One moment he vowed to hang the keeper, who, no doubt, had aided the fugitive; the next he laughed, with a softening of old recollections. "He is a brave fellow, and has made a marvellous escape: nevertheless," added the Pope, "I came down the same way from the same place when I was young!" (Benvenuto, it must be said, a little jealous of his own reputation, explains here that Farnese escaped in a basket with the aid of traitors, and had by no means performed such a feat as he: but that the Pope himself should have had a similar adventure is curiously characteristic.) All this, however, was of no avail against the influence of the Pope's son, through whom Benvenuto, with his leg still feeble, was taken from his refuge in the cardinal's palace—from the midst of all the young nobles and gallants, with whom the bold Florentine had become the fashion—and shut up in a secret chamber in the Vatican, a low room on the ground-floor, looking into the private garden. Here he was warned to eat nothing brought from the Pope's kitchen, and even detected his jailor in the act of attempting to poison him with diamond-dust—a purpose baffled by the dishonesty of the vendor, who adulterated the diamond with harmless brick

* "When the Duchess was about to make her entry into Rome, I was the cause of saving more than a thousand *scudi* of damage which the heavy rain would have done; for hearing that she was in despair about it, I gave her heart, saying that I had once already dispersed the clouds even after the rain had begun, by firing heavy pieces of artillery where the vapours were thickest; which thing I did, so arranging my guns that the rain stopped at the fourth discharge, the sun burst forth, and I was the sole cause of the success of the *fiesta*." Was this a mere superstition like the salamander in the fire, or was Benvenuto a man much in advance of his age?

dust, and thus preserved the prisoner's life. But we cannot follow Benvenuto through the horrible dungeons into which he was thrown, one worse than another. In these holes and pits he went through many painful spiritual experiences, to add to the tortures of the body, being tempted to destroy himself at one time, and then being comforted with wonderful visions. Here our artist becomes all at once as pious as he was lawless. He reads—a curious study for the half-heathen but sound Catholic of that age—as long as he has light, a Bible which somehow has fallen into his hands, writes with a mixture of crumbled bricks and filthy water, and sings psalms in the dark when nothing better is to be done, thus triumphing over his enemies, and with the fullest faith in his high favour and acceptance with God. Here is one of the snatches of verse in which he expresses the conflict between his mind and body—to be or not to be :—

“Oh troubled spirit mine,

Cruel ! how sad is this surviving ?
If 'gainst us stands the will divine,
Who is there for us, succour giving ?
Away, away to better living.

Ah, wait awhile,

For happier days will be,
Heaven promises, than e'er you knew
before.

The coming hours will smile,
Since the great God has granted free,
Grace that will never turn to weeping
more.”

Another long poem in *terza rima*, giving a second account of the afflictions of his captivity, we need not quote. We must, however, spare space for the account of the following miraculous incident, prominent mark of all the spiritual privileges with which he was favoured, which proves how entirely Benvenuto felt himself to be a chosen vessel, and a subject of heavenly revelations. He had already seen

the Saviour Himself, in a vision, with many marvellous accessories.

“Once when I was in prison, in a terrible dream, words of the greatest importance were written on my forehead, as with a pen ; and he who did it, charged me three times to keep silence and betray it to no one. When I awoke I found my forehead marked : in my poem of the Capitol, written in prison, an account is given of several such events. I was also told, without knowing who said it, of all that would happen to Signor Pier Landi, so clear and distinct that I have always believed it came from an angel of heaven. And I cannot here refrain from mentioning one thing, the most wonderful that has ever happened to any man, which I say in justification of God and His secret ways, which He condescended to make me worthy to know—that from the time when I saw these things, there rested a splendour (inexplicable miracle !) upon my head, which has been evident to every man to whom I have chosen to show it, though these have been very few. This can be perceived above my shadow in the morning, from the rising of the sun to two o'clock, and most distinctly when the grass is still wet with dew ; also it is visible in the evening when the sun sinks towards the north. I became aware of it in Paris, because the air there is much clearer, and it showed much better than in Italy, where clouds are more general : but everywhere I can see it, and show it to others, though never so well as in France.”

He was finally liberated from prison by the efforts of his friends, especially of the Cardinal of Ferrara, who had introduced him to King Francis in Paris, and had ever since wished him to be attached to the service of that monarch. The Cardinal wrung his deliverance from Pope Paul one evening when he was suffering from the nausea which seized him periodically, after a too liberal supper ; and acting upon it instantly, before the Pope could repent or his son know,

brought Benvenuto out of his prison in the middle of the night. Critical as the circumstances were, the delivered artist immediately fell to work, completing for the Cardinal a silver basin of rich workmanship, which he had begun before his imprisonment, and a fine pontifical seal, besides the model of a famous salt-cellar, which was destined to make princes jealous—before the whole party set out for France.

The story of Benvenuto's residence in France is full of romance and excitement, but so complicated with perpetual quarrels and offences that it is hard to follow the involved narrative. His friends, who are so true and generous at first, cheat and disappoint him; his servants and workmen, in whom he believes as in himself, get to have independent interests of their own, and betray him. His Cardinal, who had extorted his freedom from the Pope, and had made his fortune with Francis I., drove him frantic, as soon as he got him to Paris, by suggesting a miserable salary as the ground of his engagement, which affronted Benvenuto so much that he took horse and went off wildly, on a pilgrimage as he pretended, and had to be brought back almost by force, by mingled explanations and entreaties. And his apprentices, to whom he had been a father, betrayed him in the tenderest points—one stealing the affections of a girl to whom the master was attached, and the other endeavouring to establish his own fortunes on Benvenuto's downfall. With these drawbacks, his life at Paris was a very dashing and brilliant one. The king, though his payments were irregular, was a magnificent master to have to do

with, and paid his workmen in applause and delightful flattery at least. One of his principal adventures concerned the house allotted to him for his workshop, which was at first in the palace of the Cardinal of Ferrara, until the artist, never too humble, chose for himself the Tour de Nesle, a castle belonging to the king, but already held by a high official. Benvenuto's claim upon it was so badly received, and he was himself so much annoyed by the previous inhabitants, that he had recourse to the king, to complain to him of the failure of his claim.

"After these insults I returned to the king, begging his Majesty to find accommodation for me elsewhere; to which request the king replied, 'Who are you, and what is your name?' I stood confounded, not knowing what the king meant; and remaining before him thus silent, he repeated the same questions almost angrily. Then I replied that my name was Benvenuto. The king then said, 'If you are that Benvenuto of whom I have heard, act according to your custom. I give you full licence.' I answered his Majesty that all I wanted was to be sure of his favour, and that with this nothing could hurt me. The king smiled and said, 'Go on, then; my favour shall never fail you.'"

With this encouragement, Benvenuto, always most ready to act "according to his usual custom," defied his fellow-lodgers, armed his servants, and took triumphant possession of the old house.* Here he immediately set about a number of imposing works,—silver statues of the gods, life size, to serve as candelabra, and many other wonderful things. All these were shown to Francis when he came with his Court to visit the studio, with all the fine ladies and gallants

* This incident is the foundation of 'Ascanio,' one of Alexandre Dumas's most stirring novels.

in such a flutter of admiration as never artist had seen before. The enthusiastic monarch thereupon commissioned Benvenuto to make something for his new palace at Fontainebleau (which the Italian calls Fontana Belio). Benvenuto set to work with his usual rapidity and vehemence, and soon after we find him on his way to the king carrying with him two models—one of a gate for the palace, another embodying a fancy of his own. This was a fountain richly decorated with bas-reliefs, and surrounded with majestic flights of steps, above which stood a naked figure of great beauty with a broken lance in his hand. The king admired but did not understand this design. He had been very serious and lost in thought when Benvenuto appeared, because of “the devilries of war between the emperor and himself which were beginning again,” but had brightened at sight of the models, and was now quite ready to be amused and interested by these novelties which he did not understand. Benvenuto desired nothing better than to explain.

“‘Know, sacred Majesty, that this little model is carefully measured, and that when executed in bronze it will be as graceful as this that you see. The central figure will be fifty-four feet high’ (at this the king gave a look of astonishment), ‘and represents the god Mars. These four figures represent the Virtues, in which your Majesty takes so much delight. . . . But the great figure in the middle is made for your Majesty yourself, who are Mars in your own person—the sole hero in the world; and your courage is used justly and righteously for the defence of your glory.’ He had scarcely patience to allow me to finish these words, when, raising his voice, he cried out, ‘Truly, I have now found a man after my own heart;’ and calling the treasurer, he ordered him to supply me with all I needed,

whatever the outlay might be; then putting his hand on my shoulder, said to me, ‘*Mon ami*’ [“*che vuol dire amico mio*,” says Benvenuto, proud of his king’s friendship], ‘I do not know which is the greatest pleasure, that of a prince who has found a man after his own heart, or that of the artist who has found a prince ready to give him every licence to work out his finest fancies.’ I answered that if his Majesty meant me, I thought myself the most fortunate; upon which he replied, laughing, ‘Say rather that we are equal.’ Then I went away with a light heart, and returned to my work.”

But, alas! all were not so gracious as Francis. Benvenuto’s boldness had displeased from the outset Madame d’Estampes, the reigning favourite (whom he calls De Tampes), who undermined him, as he thought, in every way. The Cardinal of Ferrara stopped the supplies which the king had ordered him, and held Benvenuto back after having done everything to advance him; and things on the whole went badly with the artist. Everybody except Francis behaved unkindly and treacherously; and even Francis was capricious, and not always in the humour for his models or his bold talk. The undesirable neighbours who still clung about him within and about the Tour de Nesle, put him to the disagreeable necessity sometimes of ousting them by force (not doing them any harm, only throwing their furniture out of the windows, he explains), and sometimes of appearing at the law courts to answer some plea against him. Even his experiences in the courts, however, teach Benvenuto something, and in the very midst of his troubles he pauses to make the following note, which will interest readers of Dante. He is struck with admiration, in the first place, of the judge, “an admirable man, with the aspect of Plato,” who listened to everybody,

and let nothing escape his attention.

"It is so delightful to me to see and enjoy every kind of good, and this appeared to me so marvellous that I would not for much have lost the opportunity of beholding it. It was necessary, as the hall was very full, to take great care that no one came in save those who had business there; and accordingly the doors were kept shut, with a keeper at each door. The keepers made such a noise whenever any one attempted to enter, to keep out as many as possible, that they disturbed this wonderful judge, who angrily reproved them. This turned my attention to observe what happened, and the words the judge said on seeing two gentlemen hindered from coming in by the keeper were these, 'Be quiet, be quiet, Satan; go away from there, and be quiet.' These words in the French tongue sound thus, '*Phe phe, Satan, phe phe, alé phe.*' I, who had learned French, hearing these words, bethought myself of what Dante intended to say when he went in with his master, Virgil, within the gates of the Inferno. Now Dante, in the days of Giotto the painter, was with him in France, and particularly in Paris, where it might well be said that the place in which litigation was going on was an Inferno; and Dante, who also understood French, made use of this form of words. It seems to me strange that no one has remarked this before."

The reader will recollect the mysterious gibberish, "Pape Satan, pape Satan, aleppe," which Dante puts into the mouth of Plutus in the beginning of the seventh canto of the "Inferno." They have puzzled many a student, and eke many a commentator: whether Benvenuto has thrown any light upon the meaning, it would be hard to say, but his keen observation is interesting, and his suggestion ingenious at least.

However, as time went on, Benvenuto became more and more discouraged. He had been over four years in France, with many vicis-

situdes of Court favour, and evident difficulty in getting the silver and gold necessary for his work, as well as his own pay and profit, when, tired of France, or of Francis, or of the enmity of Madame d'Estampes, or alarmed lest the king, who had rebuked him for boldness of speech, might be moved to go further, he suddenly went off one fine morning to Italy, leaving his uncompleted works and his workmen behind. It is not easy to penetrate the real motives of his sudden flight; but the fact that certain officials of the Court, accompanied by his own man Ascanio, were sent after him to bring back two vases which he was carrying away, and that he, so high-handed in his dealings with the various potentates whom he served and defied, allowed these beloved objects to be taken from him, throws a new light upon the agitations of this portion of Benvenuto's career. Perhaps he thought himself justified, in consideration of the many claims he put forth against the royal exchequer, in carrying off what was in his hands; but it was somewhat ignominious to be compelled to restore them, and it is evident that the artist felt the humiliation. He proceeded on his way, very sad at heart, not able to keep from sighing and weeping. In the midst of his distress, however, there is something whimsical in the sudden production all at once of an entirely new motive for his flight, which he would seem to have invented in his trouble, by way of giving a better aspect to his conduct in his own eyes, and which is first made known to the reader, of all places in the world, in his prayers. "I comforted myself in God," he says suddenly, "saying: 'Signore Iddio, Thou knowest the truth; Thou knowest that this my going is solely to carry help to six poor little maid-

ens and their mother, my sister. . . . Therefore, as I am engaged in so pious a work, I hope from Thy Majesty aid and counsel." The curious cunning and simplicity of this strange device are inimitable; for we have never heard a word of the six poor little maidens until the moment when the discomfited hero stood so much in need of some finer inducement than mere self-preservation to justify his flight. That this little artifice should be played off, presumably as soon as it was suggested to his quick wits, upon God Himself, a potentate very different from either the Pope or King Francis, is still more extraordinary. And it is equally curious to note the sincerity with which the wily but simple Italian, having invented this charitable reason for his journey, as giving him a claim upon the protection of God, instantly and really adopts it as a generous intention, to the great advantage of the six poor little maidens thus suddenly become to him a band of guardian angels propitiating heaven. His fears and startled imagination have no sooner suggested the hypothesis than his ready wit seizes upon it: henceforward it becomes an object of faith with him; and no doubt that he is a virtuous victim, sacrificing himself for the benefit of his family, crosses his mind. He seeks out the family of Liparata immediately on his return to Florence, and carries out his intention manfully. The whole transaction forms a very curious incident in the story of this keen, rash, subtle, egotistical, yet not ungenerous mind.

It was a natural conclusion to the life of Giovanni Cellini's son, a born retainer of the Medici, that he should finish his days in Florence, under the patronage of the second great Duke Cosmo, by whom the tyranny of the reigning

family was fully established, and all the dreams and aspirations of the town of Dante and Savonarola finally obliterated. The struggles of the republicans had never affected Benvenuto's artist soul. He had been too deeply engaged in the thousand personal feuds of his own life to take much thought of politics; but so much feeling as he had on the subject was, it is evident, warmly in favour of the Medici, and against the religious party—the Puritans of Florence. He was in his natural place when he returned to find once more a gracious and native prince smiling upon him, and abundant room for work in his native town. He had scarcely got footing in it again when he seems to have begun his plans and designs for the great Perseus in the Piazza—the work upon which he now intended to stake his reputation. Nothing so great had ever occupied him before; and it was not unnatural that the rival sculptors of Florence should consider the goldsmith, great and famous as he was, incapable of taking so ambitious a piece of work out of their hands. It was not without vexations and hindrances innumerable that he got this undertaking fairly started; and the story of the casting of the statue is one of the most exciting in the book. Benvenuto gives a detailed description of all his preparations for this anxious moment, almost the most important of his artist-life, which our space forbids us to quote. On the very eve of pouring the metal into the mould, he was seized with an attack of fever, and was compelled to leave the decisive operation to the workmen, whom he had carefully instructed, and to throw himself, half dead, in overwhelming anxiety of mind, and with a conviction that he was dying, upon his bed.

“As I lay thus for two hours struggling with the fever (which I felt increasing every moment), and saying ‘I am dying,’ my housekeeper, whose name was Monna Fiore di Castel del Rio (this woman was the best that ever was born, and the most lovable), had great compassion for me, and comforted me with all her power; but seeing me so lost and cast down, even her brave heart could not keep up, and she shed torrents of tears, hiding them from me as well as she was able. While I was in this immeasurable distress a man came into the room, twisted in his person like an S, and cried out in a pitiful voice, like one who is commissioned to call a criminal to execution, ‘O Benvenuto! your work is spoiled, and there is no help for it in all the world.’ As soon as I heard this miserable fellow’s words, I gave an indescribable cry, which might have been heard in the seventh heaven, and starting from my bed, seized my clothes to put them on, every one crowding round me to help, though I hit at them on every side with my arms and feet, crying out, ‘O traitors, envious wretches! this is a villanous contrivance; but I swear to God that I will know who has done it, and before I die I will make an example of them.’ When I was dressed, I rushed to the workshop with burning heart, where I found all my people, whom I had left in such high courage, standing about in the greatest confusion. Then I cried, ‘Mark me, now; if you did not before understand or obey what I told you, obey me now that I am here in your presence, and let no one say a word to me, for such a case as this needs help and not advice.’ To these words a certain Alessandro Lastricati replied, ‘Benvenuto, you have undertaken a thing which art does not allow, and which cannot be done.’ Upon which I turned upon him with such rage and murder in my eyes that he and all the rest cried out, ‘Tell us what to do, and we will do it while life lasts.’ They said these friendly words, I believe, because they thought I would fall down dead among them. Then I looked into the furnace and saw the metal all in a lump like a millet pud-

ding. I told two of the labourers to go and fetch a load of young oak, very dry, which Ginevra, the baker’s wife, had offered me; and as soon as the first armful was brought, I began to heap up the fire. Oak of that sort makes a better fire than any other kind of wood (although elder wood and pine are used for casting guns, as making a milder heat); and oh, when our millet pudding began to feel that terrible blaze, how it cleared and glowed! . . . As soon as I had thus set things to rights, I cried to the workmen to bestir themselves; so that as soon as the said porridge began to liquefy, all the band were so inspired with zeal, that each man did the work of three. I then got a half piece of pewter, about sixty pounds weight, and threw it into the furnace in the middle of the porridge, which with other helps, renewing the fire and stirring it with iron bars and stakes, in a short time became liquid. Now, seeing that I had brought the dead to life against all the belief of these ignorant fellows, I felt so much vigour in me that I feared no more either fever or death. Suddenly we heard a great noise, accompanied by a blaze of flame as if it had been lightning, which struck terror to all present, and to myself more than all. When the noise was over, we gazed at each other; and soon perceiving that the cover of the furnace had burst and the bronze began to rise, I immediately opened the mouths of my mould; but seeing that the metal did not flow so quickly as it ought, and knowing that this was caused by the destruction of the *lega*,* I took all my pewter plates and dishes, of which I had some two hundred, and put them one by one in the front of the tubes, while the rest were thrown into the furnace. So then, every one perceiving that the bronze was flowing freely and the mould filling, all laboured on gaily and willingly, and I in the midst, now here, now there, giving my orders, lending a hand, crying as I worked, ‘O God, who with Thy great worth raised the dead! O Thou who so gloriously ascended to heaven!—’ So that in a moment the mould was filled: whereupon I threw myself on

* Inferior metal added to make the mass cohere.

my knees and thanked God with all my heart. After this I turned to a salad that was upon a bench, and ate it with great appetite, and drank with all the band, then went to bed well and glad, for it was still two hours before dawn, and slept sweetly, as if I had never known what sickness was."

This wonderful picture of the desperate artist, a sort of demoniac in the glow of the flames, shouting, swearing, praying, denouncing vengeance, giving thanks, with all the swart faces round him kindling to the wild enthusiasm of the moment, is worthy of Rembrandt. The issue of the conflict was that graceful Perseus, now standing under the *loggia* in the famous square of Florence, which has seen so many strange sights—and which was filled some time after with a rapturous crowd to see this wonder of the world, and its maker, bringing him flowers, and sonnets, and praises, till the sky rang.

With this triumph we may leave Benvenuto. He lived many years after, and never ceased to struggle for his money, to demand a clearing up of his accounts, to be disappointed, angry, impassioned, out of favour and in favour twenty times in a month; but nevertheless lived on in his native town, though his hands were full of feuds as usual, and the jealousy of his rivals pursued him to the end. It is true that he was scarcely settled in Florence when he began to regret his Tour de Nesle and his royal patron, of whom he always speaks with enthusiasm, as the greatest king of the world, the most Christian Majesty—"with whom was my great glory," he says, after

Francis was dead: but Duke Cosmo also was a *benignissimo signore*, though his goldsmith did nothing but wrangle with him and all his treasurers, and every other sculptor employed about the Court. This was natural to him; and probably life would have been impossible to the choleric Florentine without this constant spice of quarrel. He married in his old age, it is conjectured that "best woman that ever was born," who consoled and wept with him in his trouble about the casting of the Perseus—though her name is Fiore in that narrative, and Piera in the official documents. This, however, might be an error of the copyist. He had been by no means superior to his age in point of morality. But Benvenuto in his later years, if always quarrelsome, was, so far as appears, a good husband and an anxious father. His children, of whom he lost several, are mentioned individually in his will with sedulous care—the chance that his two daughters might become nuns being carefully provided for. He died in Florence in 1571, having completed his three-score and ten years, and more labours than fall to the lot of most men. Of all his works, none is more original than the portrait of himself which he has left behind him—a book which throws the most curious, capricious light upon an agitated and eventful age, and puts forth in full exhibition, with all his faults and follies, his passions and vices, and the turbulent and vigorous soul which carried him through them all, one of the most distinct and individual of men.

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY.—PART III.

CHAPTER VII.

NEXT morning, Clifford, going out for his usual walk, made his way to the Knightsbridge Barracks, and, feeling very shy about it, sought out the riding-master's quarters, and the school being disengaged at that time, went through an hour's mild bumping there and then. Although not altogether inexperienced in riding, he was not a good horseman, and felt unequal to the responsibility of accepting his beautiful cousin's offer to be her escort without further practice. A daily repetition of the procedure throughout the week brought him to the point of being able to sit the riding-master's well-broken charger at a trot without using stirrups, and even to take the bar, nearly two feet high, without alighting on the animal's neck. The next thing, while continuing his training, was to procure a horse for himself; and accordingly on the following Monday he betook himself to the weekly sale at Tattersall's. Judging from the long auction list, abundant choice was to be had; but the descriptions were too brief to help him to a decision, and the sales went on so rapidly that he had no time to make up his mind to the leap in the dark of buying an animal of which he knew nothing. One after another the horses were led out and taken back again to their stables, after being knocked down in a few seconds—although no one appeared to bid—some for low, some for high, and some for moderate prices. The time flew by, and it was one o'clock, and the auction half over, while Clifford found himself no nearer towards attaining his object than at the beginning, when he was accosted by

Captain Burrard, to whose inquiry he replied that he was in want of a park hack, but could not make up his mind to bid.

"And quite right too," replied Burrard; "only vets can afford to buy horses in the dark, and turn over a ten-pound note now and then by making a good hit. Never buy a horse at auction unless you know his character. Now there's the very thing to suit you, as it happens, up for sale to-day. You are not looking out for anything exactly in steeplechase form, I take it; what you want is a good-looking quiet nag, with safe action, and so forth, and good manners,—a regular park hack, in fact. Now here is just the very thing to suit you—lot 85; it belongs to Tommy Bowles; it is his wife's mare: a child might ride it,—perfect mouth and perfect manners. The lady is in an interesting situation, you must know; an heir to the Bowles's expected after seven years' marriage, so horse exercise is stopped. He wanted a hundred and twenty for it, and you can't do wrong to go as high as eighty. Here it comes, this bay mare,—she'll carry you well, for I don't suppose you ride more than twelve stone. Will you go up to eighty?" And Burrard pushed his way into the crowd round the auctioneer's platform, followed by Clifford. The bay mare was trotted once up and down, and the auctioneer called the bids up to seventy-five guineas, although the thing went so fast Clifford could not distinguish any bidders, and did not see that his companion even so much as nodded his head. Then the latter went up and said a word

to the auctioneer's clerk, pointing to Clifford as if to explain who he was, and then rejoining him, said, "You have got the mare cheap at seventy-five guineas, take my word for it; horses are going low to-day all round,"—and so Clifford understood that he was the possessor of the mare. Burrard carried his kindness to the further point of taking him to a stable not far from his chambers, where it was arranged that the new purchase should be kept at livery; and the Captain, who appeared to be well known there, laid strict injunctions on the head groom to take particular care of her, for that Mr Clifford was a friend of his—an assurance which made an evident impression on the man. Clifford, while expressing his thanks, felt almost uneasy at being under this obligation to an acquaintance of such short standing. But the other assured him that there was really nothing to thank him about,—he had looked in at Tattersall's because he had nothing better to do, and was quite pleased to have been of use in a small way; and then Clifford began to be possessed with a suspicion that the service might be not altogether disinterested. He had heard that there was a great deal of rascality in horse-dealing. Why should a man of fashion take so much trouble about an obscure person like himself, unless he wanted to make use of him? This passed through his mind as the two walked down Victoria Street together from the livery stables; for Clifford having said he was going homewards, the Captain volunteered to accompany him so far. Arrived before the Alexandra Mansions, Clifford felt that he could not but ask his companion to step in and take some luncheon, although, as it was now past two o'clock, there would be nothing left to eat,

and it was a relief to him when the other declined the invitation, on the score of having breakfasted late. "So these are the Alexandra Mansions," he added, looking up at the lofty façade. "I have heard a good deal about these mansions, but have never been inside them: I should like just to step in and look at your flat. Several of our fellows live in flats; I am too poor to afford a flat myself, otherwise I think I should like to live in one; however, I should like to see yours."

As they mounted the central staircase together, Clifford was so absorbed in his unwonted position of having to play the host, and to a man of fashion, that it was not until he had opened the door leading from the staircase into the flat with his latch-key, that he suddenly recollected Miss Reid would probably be within. As the thought came up he raised his voice, in speaking to Burrard, to intimate that he was accompanied by a visitor. But the signal was mistaken: probably the secretary thought he was calling to her, for, opening the door of her office, she made a movement forward, with some papers in her hand; then seeing that Clifford was not alone, she hastily retreated and closed the door again.

The inner passage of the flat was dimly lighted, having only one window, and that into the outer staircase, but Clifford could see that his companion was looking at him with an appearance of amused inquiry on his face. He was conscious of blushing too as he said, in reply to the query implied in Burrard's expression, "A lady who is doing some literary work for me. She comes and works here every morning."

"Quite so," observed Burrard; "and a deuced pleasant arrangement too."

They looked in upon the sitting-room, which Burrard pronounced

very snug, lined as it was with book-cases, and went over the offices; and then, as they returned into the hall, Burrard paused and looked round him.

"You see what sort of place it is," said Clifford, by way of dismissing his guest; "all the rooms are much the same."

"And a very snug place too," replied Burrard,—*"although the ceilings are a little low, and this passage is a trifle dark."* Then he glanced round, taking a survey of the different doors, beginning with the entrance to the servants' offices, till his eye rested on that of Miss Reid's room.

He pointed to it with his cane, and gave Clifford a friendly poke.

"Literary work, eh?" he said, in a low voice, repeating the poke;—"a lady help, eh, comes every morning to work, does she? Upon my word, you are one of the sly sort, evidently. But, my dear fellow, what would the little girl in Charles Street say if she knew of your—your literary work? You must take care it doesn't come to her ears." And so saying, and without waiting for Clifford's disclaimer, the Captain took his departure, leaving Clifford a little amused and very much ashamed, while his face flushed crimson as he thought that Miss Reid might have heard what was said; and if so, how could they ever look each other in the face again? But when, regaining composure, he entered her room shortly afterwards, her manner displayed no sense of unusual embarrassment; the uneasiness at what had happened was apparently felt only by himself. How, thought he, can I protect her from a recurrence of these disgraceful suspicions? One simple plan—that of putting an end to the engagement—he would not allow himself to entertain. Her presence in the

house, her gentle ways, her sweet temper, her cleverness and humour, above all, her beauty, which he came to feel the force of more every day, had infused a subtle flavour of pleasure into the atmosphere of the house, of which he could not bring himself to contemplate even the possibility of denying himself the enjoyment. The other alternative for stopping scandal, which at one time had begun to be often present in his thoughts, had dropped out of his mind since the arrival of his cousin.

It was not without a nervous feeling that, on the same afternoon, Clifford mounted his new purchase, which the groom brought round to the door of the Mansions. Supposing she turned out to be vicious, or began to play tricks in the streets, he would probably be thrown off, or otherwise be made to look ridiculous, which would be far worse than a fall. And he did not mount till the private secretary had taken leave for the day, lest she should be looking out of the window. The groom's remark that the mare seemed "a nice thing, with very good manners," was, however, reassuring. This was just how Burrard had described her; and in effect she proved to be as quiet as a sheep, although stepping briskly out,—treating all the noise and bustle of the streets with perfect unconcern. After making the round of the Park, her rider had acquired so much confidence in her and himself, that he sent off a note to his cousin asking if he might call for her to take a ride the next forenoon. Although his cousin had been almost constantly in his thoughts since their first meeting, he had seen her only once. When he called two days after the dinner, the ladies were out. Then came a note from his aunt expressing great regret on the part of Blanche and

herself at having missed him, whereupon he called again, this time to find the room full of visitors—fellow-passengers from New York who were staying at the Langham Hotel, as he inferred from allusions in the conversation; and although his cousin held out her pretty hand, and vouchsafed him what by a liberal interpretation might be termed a smile, the chairs round her were all occupied, and he was standing awkwardly before her, when his aunt made room for him near herself.

Mrs Scallan was cordial enough, but had little time to give to him individually; and after remaining seated for a few minutes, longing to speak to somebody, yet wanting courage to do so, he effected his retreat under cover of some fresh arrivals, so that he had made no progress towards intimacy with Blanche, and it was after much doubting that he signed himself, in his note, her affectionate cousin. The reply was encouraging in one sense. "My dear Robert,"—so it ran,—"*thank you for your kind offer: will you come and take charge of me about twelve o'clock? Believe me, yours truly,—Blanche.*" Take charge of her! The very idea of being protector of this beautiful creature gave him a thrill of ecstasy, to be checked, however, by the rebuke to his familiarity implied in the way the note ended. True, she called him Robert; but she did not acknowledge the cousin-hood. Had he been the merest acquaintance, she could not have written more formally. And, after all, he was only a mere acquaintance,—he knew nothing about his cousin. So that it was with mingled feelings of elation and doubt that he rode up to the door of Mrs Scallan's house, before which the groom was leading a couple of horses up and down, one of them carrying a side-saddle.

His cousin was not ready, and he was shown into the drawing-room. Presently she came down, looking, as he thought, more beautiful than ever; while the riding-habit set off her superb figure to even greater advantage than an ordinary dress. She greeted him in a hearty, natural manner, as she apologised for having kept him waiting, such as she had never before exhibited, and which filled him with elation. This idea of riding with her was evidently a happy one.

When they got to the door he offered to help her to mount, as in duty bound, although not in the least knowing how to do so; and the young lady, holding out a small booted foot, which it was evidently intended he should do something with, he seized it with both his hands, and tried to lift her up by sheer force. Not being a strong man, he failed; and Blanche, after struggling in vain to gain her saddle, was fain to slip down again to the pavement. "I am so sorry," said Clifford, colouring with shame and exertion; "I will manage better next time." "I think you had better let William do it," she said, pettishly: "will you hold the horses for him?" and putting her foot on the palm of William's hand, and giving a spring, the feat of mounting was accomplished in a moment. Clifford, as he mounted afterwards, and, overtaking his cousin, rode down the street by her side, felt too much discomfited to say anything; and the lady did not offer to break the silence. By the time, however, that they had reached the Park, things had improved; and after a canter, in which Clifford felt that he acquitted himself properly, the young lady condescended to admire his mare, and to listen with an appearance of interest while he explained how he had been assisted

in the purchase by Burrard; whereupon she remarked that Captain Burrard was considered a famous judge of horses. He had chosen the one she was riding, which had been hired for the season. So far things were going well. The Park was very full; but although neither of them had any acquaintances, their appearance attracted a good deal of attention, to which Blanche, who was accustomed to be noticed, had evidently no objection. This was her first public appearance in London, and it was no doubt satisfactory to find that the expectation founded on her beauty was justified by the evident sensation it produced. But some of the riders looked at Clifford also; and one gentleman in particular, turning round in his saddle after he had passed, gave him an amused stare, which Miss Scallan noticing, she also looked sideways at her companion, and then turned her head away with an air of vexation. Clifford tried to appear unconcerned, although wondering what was amiss. It could not be his riding, he thought, for the riding-master had assured him that he had now got a very proper seat; and besides, they were now going only at a walk, so that there was nothing to try it.

This evident ill-humour of the young lady continued for some time, till they met Burrard, who was riding with a party, but turned and joined them, inquiring how she liked her horse. "There is not a better hack in the Park at this moment," he said; "but anything less perfect would not be fit for you. I told Robins the horse was wanted to carry the most beautiful woman in the world, and that he must pick out his very best. There is no need to blush, Miss Scallan;"—but indeed the young lady did not show much tendency that way; she merely laughed, and

tossed her head—"I am a blunt sort of fellow, and I must speak the truth. And your cousin, too, has got not half a bad little nag. Got him cheap, your cousin did, Miss Scallan, I assure you. I don't buy many horses for myself, you know,—I can't afford it; and I don't know many things; I couldn't get into the Staff College when I was in the army, although I tried ever so hard; but I do know a horse when I see one, and my friends often consult me when they are on the lookout for new ones, and I was very glad to be able to help your cousin to a decent mount. He is *your* cousin, don't you know, not to say that he is himself." Burrard accompanied this remark with a look towards Clifford, as much as to say—this is the sort of way to talk to young ladies; flatter them up to their faces—that's what they like. Burrard was so lively and pleasant—pointing out various celebrities who were taking their exercise, and whose faces were as much unknown to Clifford as to his cousin—that by the time he rode off again Miss Scallan had recovered her good temper, and when she dismounted before the door in Charles Street, invited her cousin to come in and stay to lunch in what was, for her, so pressing a manner, that Clifford delightedly accepted the invitation. There were no other visitors on this occasion; and as Clifford sat between the two ladies at the cosy little round table, he was more at his ease with them than he had ever been before, and felt, for the first time, that he was making progress towards intimacy. The meal was a substantial one, and both the ladies did justice to it; health goes with beauty, and Blanche had a very good appetite. She laughed and talked in a natural voice, and was quite unaffected, and altogether, in Clifford's eyes, as charming as she was beautiful.

"This is what I like," said Mrs Scallan, "to see Robert sitting here like one of ourselves; and Blanche is as pleased as I am to find her cousin again." But observing from a passing shade of displeasure on the face of that young lady that she was going too far, she hastened to add—"it is so convenient, too, for her to have some one to ride with her. I am glad you have taken to riding too; exercise is good for young men. That was what I was always telling the young fellows in New York; they never took any exercise except when they went down to Wall Street."

"But I take a great deal, aunt. I am very fond of rowing. I don't keep up my boat in the winter; but I do a lot of boating in the summer. My boat will be ready for the season next week."

"You must take us out for a row in your boat, some day," said Mrs Scallan, "as soon as the weather gets a little warmer."

"I can hardly take you in mine, aunt, for it holds only one person; but boats are easily got, if you and Blanche will do me the honour to come."

"I should like it above all things," said Blanche, in a tone of indifference.

"That I am sure she will," added her mother, by way of making up for the young lady's want of enthusiasm. She rose from the table as she spoke, divining from her daughter's manner that she wanted to be off: it was indeed time for Miss Blanche to get her afternoon nap, preparatory to dressing for the afternoon. "You must not let us detain you any longer," continued Mrs Scallan, anxious to get rid of Clifford before Blanche displayed any more ill temper; "you must be dying to get back to your books; it has been very good of you to give us so much of your

day." And Clifford, acting on the hint, took his leave, without accompanying the ladies up-stairs, although, poor fellow, he had been looking to spend the whole afternoon with them.

"Well, you seem to have got on very well together," said Mrs Scallan to her daughter, as they went up-stairs.

Blanche did not answer; and her mother continued—

"Robert is improving very much. There is a great deal in him, I am sure; he had so much more to say for himself to-day."

"I really thought I could hardly bear it," broke out the young lady, petulantly. "Did you ever see such a guy as he looks? All the Row were staring at us."

Now Clifford was not a bad-looking fellow. He had good features, and a clear complexion, and frank grey eyes; but he let his light hair grow longer than was customary, and was usually dressed in a long frock-coat, not too well made: a black necktie, with a good deal of shirt-collar turned down over it, and very loose trousers, completed his costume. He certainly looked as if he had gone out riding by accident.

"My dear Blanche, Rome was not built in a day. Robert is a very improvable young man."

"Then I wish he would improve himself quickly," replied the young lady, pettishly. "Why don't you tell him not to wear such ridiculous clothes?"

"That would be taking too great a liberty. I don't want to frighten him away. I dare say," continued Mrs Scallan, with a smile meant to propitiate, "the time will come by and by when you will be able to tell him about these things yourself, and anything else you please. I am sure, when you think of the way in which he was kept tied to

your uncle's arm-chair, it is wonderful how well he has turned out. I couldn't have believed he would ever have become so presentable as he is."

"I don't believe it, even now," retorted Blanche, crossly, passing on towards her room.

"I don't know what you would be at, Blanche, I am sure," said her mother, mournfully. "But you may carry your tantrums a little too far. A clear five thousand a-year, Blanche, remember that; and I'll be bound he doesn't spend five hundred."

Possibly it may have been because she had heard this before that Blanche closed the door abruptly in her mother's face while the sentence was still unfinished. Yet it must not be supposed, because she displayed this exhibition of feeling, that the young lady was being dragged an unwilling sacrifice to the altar erected by a too worldly-minded parent. Miss Blanche understood perfectly what was the main object for which they had come over to England; and before they sailed, her father, of whom she stood in some awe, had given her distinctly to understand that there was to be no trifling about the matter. But the girl felt instinctively that her aspect as a constellation in the London world would suffer a partial eclipse if she appeared with her cousin tacked on to her as an affianced lover. Clifford must be kept in hand, but not encouraged to be too demonstrative at first, or the glories of the London season would not be hers. Possibly, too, there may have been present some indefinite hope of doing even better for herself than to marry a man in easy circumstances. At any rate, she would appear to be free while the season lasted. Her cousin's inclinations were taken for granted, and indeed the young fel-

low was plainly under the spell of her beauty; but for the present he must not be allowed so much encouragement as might embolden him to make an offer needing a distinct answer. And lastly, it suited the girl's wayward temper to run counter to her mother. Had the latter shown any decrease of interest in the affair, the repugnance of Miss Blanche would probably have undergone a sensible abatement.

It was in pursuance of these feelings, so far as the capricious young lady had any definite plans of action, that when Clifford rode up to the house the next day at the same hour, he found a note from her waiting him to excuse herself from keeping the appointment made. She was confined to her room with a bad headache, she said; and indeed she had taken a late breakfast in bed, and was not yet up. But the note was so much more graciously worded than the first she had sent him, that the disappointment was robbed of half its sting. He was riding home, feeling notwithstanding somewhat mortified and depressed in spirit, when, at the corner of St James's Street, a voice hailed him. It proceeded from Burrard, and he pulled up while the latter asked him how he liked the mare. "Just the thing for you," said the Captain,—*"I knew it would be; and you sit her well, too. I hope you don't mind my saying that; it's just like the family doctor asking to see your tongue, don't you know? And there's another thing you won't mind my saying, I hope,"* he added in a low voice, with his hand on the mare's neck. *"I am one of those fellows who must always say what he thinks. You ought to get yourself up a little more for riding. A shorter coat and tighter overalls would be more the thing, don't you know? You*

won't mind my mentioning it, but you may depend on it the little cousin would be better pleased if her cavalier looked a trifle more horsey; and if you were to go to Truefitt's and get clipped a bit, it would do you no harm." This advice jumped so with the inference Clifford was now disposed to draw from his dismissal, that instead of resenting it, as he might have done, although it was given so good-naturedly, he expressed himself quite grateful for it. Burrard thereon asked him who his tailor was. Clifford replied that he was a worthy man who, he had reason to believe, was not very well off. "Ah," said Burrard, "I don't know much about political econo-

my, but I fancy the professors of the science would tell you that it was bad economy to select your tailor on charitable grounds. He may be a worthy man, but cutting-out is not among his virtues." And on Clifford asking him to recommend a tailor, Burrard said that he dared say his own people just across the street would do as well as another; they made for a good many fellows in the Brigade; if Clifford liked to mention his name, they might be trusted to treat him well. Clifford, thanking him, and promising him to give them an order, rode on; but he felt half inclined to put down the good-natured man's advocacy to the desire to secure a commission.

CHAPTER VIII.

Much although he would have liked to do so, a feeling of pride restrained Clifford from going to Charles Street next day. On getting home, after his fruitless visit of the previous morning, he had at once written to express his regret at hearing Blanche was unwell, but no answer had come to his note, and, although restless and uneasy at the constrained absence, he felt that some advance was now needed from her side before he could call again. Instead, therefore, of going out riding, he countermanded the mare, and walked to pay a visit to the tailor whom Burrard had recommended. Returning home, he was startled by finding his aunt's carriage drawn up at the door of the Alexandra Mansions. The ladies had just gone up-stairs, said the servant waiting below. Ever since her arrival in town, Clifford had been in constant fear that his aunt might pay him an unexpected visit; and in view of such a contingency, and in case his aunt

should come in his absence, he had arranged that Miss Reid should always take her leave for the day before he went out in the afternoon. But he did not anticipate a visit in the forenoon, for usually late hours were kept in Charles Street, and he had not provided for such a contingency. Miss Reid, he had every reason to believe, was in the house at this moment, and he rushed up the staircase, eager and anxious.

Simmonds, hearing him opening the door of the flat with his latch-key, met him at once. She had evidently been waiting for him. Mrs and Miss Scallan had just come; they said they would wait till his return; she had shown them into his room. Simmonds said nothing more, but her manner implied that nothing had been discovered, and that her sympathies were enlisted on his side.

As he entered the room where his aunt and cousin were sitting, Clifford glanced hastily round to

see if anything suspicious could be detected, and was relieved to see that there was nothing lying about, and that the manner of the ladies betrayed no consciousness of having discovered his secret. His cousin as she rose gave him a laughing greeting, and was more gracious than she had ever shown herself before as she expressed her regret for having disappointed him the previous day; and when Clifford, rising to the occasion, said that although this was the first time she had paid him the honour of a visit, he hoped it would not be the last, she smiled a response which he found very winning.

"I hope not, indeed," said Mrs Scallan, anticipating her reply. "So this is what you call a flat, is it? I was never in a flat before,—and very nice it is. Robert has made himself very comfortable, hasn't he, Blanche? but he wants a few knick-knacks. Blanche was wondering what she could work for you that would be of use,—now she has seen the place, she will be able to hit on something that will suit it. And now, Robert, you must show us round the flat: we can only stay for a minute, for we have an appointment with Madame Jupon, the Court milliner, and if we are not punctual, and lose our turn, we shall be kept waiting all day; but we thought we would have a peep at you, as we were before our time, and we must just see the place before we go." And so saying, Mrs Scallan led the way to the door, and opening it, passed into the passage, and Clifford had no alternative but to follow.

They first looked at his bedroom opposite, which was very neat and comfortable. "You are quite a luxurious bachelor," was Mrs Scallan's remark thereon; "isn't he, Blanche?" turning to her daughter, standing in the doorway behind.

"You needn't be afraid just to peep in, Blanche." Then she added in a whisper to Clifford, "Blanche is so prudish, you know; but it is a fault on the right side, isn't it? Modesty is such a nice thing in young girls." Having thus hit off this striking characteristic of her daughter, Mrs Scallan passed across the passage again to the dining-room. This was hardly ever used, and looked bare and formal.

"I wish I could ask you to stay and lunch, aunt," said Clifford; "but I am afraid there is nothing in the house, for I never eat luncheon. But come and see the offices, for I am sure you will like them."

Mrs Scallan declared herself charmed with the pantry and scullery, so light and airy; and the lift for bringing up coals and heavy articles was so handy; the kitchen also, although small, was pronounced very nice.

"But I thought you said you never eat luncheon?" she observed, pointing to the tray on which a small dish of cutlets had just been placed, being, in fact, Miss Reid's early dinner. "I thought you said you never took luncheon at home?"

"Me and Jane has to have dinner, you know—dinner, ma'am," explained Simmonds, with ready wit.

"I must say," said Mrs Scallan, as they passed from the kitchen out of Simmonds' hearing, "that you bachelors spoil your servants. The idea of these women having their dinner off plates like that, and with napkins too!"

"Simmonds is not like an ordinary servant," explained Clifford, apologetically.

"Oh, of course," retorted his aunt, "you think Simmonds a paragon of excellence. I am sure I hope she is. But you have not shown us these rooms," she continued, as they returned to the hall; and so saying, Mrs Scallan opened

the door of one of them—the second from the entrance door—and entered it before Clifford could stop her. This was the room used by Miss Reid as a dressing-room: it contained little furniture, save a table and looking-glass; but there were a brush and comb on the former, and the wash-stand was disarranged.

Mrs Scallan looked at her nephew, as if asking what this was for. It was a sort of spare room, he said, hurriedly; his man of business used it to wash his hands in when he came. "And this," he continued, placing himself before the door of Miss Reid's room, to which his aunt was now moving forwards—"this is the room he sits in when he has any work to do here. It is littered with papers—a sort of lumber room," he continued, in desperation, as his aunt seemed to expect that he would lead the way in; "it is really not fit for you to see. I should quite lose my character for neatness if you were to see it as it is now." His aunt turned back, and moved again into the passage.

The door of the dressing-room had been thrown wide open, so that only the side of it facing the passage had been visible to Mrs Scallan. But while this little scene was enacting, her daughter had advanced as far as the window on the opposite side of the room. As she now followed her mother out of the room, while her cousin stood gallantly on one side to let her pass by, she pointed with her parasol to the back of the door, making a significant gesture at the same time. Following the direction of her eyes, Clifford made a step backward, and then saw what she had been pointing at. Hanging on the peg at the back of the door were a woman's hat—a small neat hat—and a little cloak.

Clifford coloured up as his cousin

looked at him with an inquiring and amused look, and muttered something about Simmonds having left her things about.

"They must look very becoming on Mrs Simmonds," she whispered archly, and with more animation than she had ever shown before in his presence, as she followed her mother out of the room; "that hat must be just in her style."

Thus ended the visit. Clifford felt that he had had a narrow escape. Similar dangers would be sure to arise, and he could not expect to be always as lucky. Yet he did not see the way to take any more precautions. His first impulse, indeed, was to tell his aunt of Miss Reid's engagement, especially on account of the suspicion implied in his cousin's manner, which it seemed impossible to mistake. But then he knew enough of his aunt to be sure that if she knew it, he would be allowed no peace until the private secretary was got rid of; and preoccupied although he had been of late with his cousin, Miss Reid's presence was now become quite necessary to him. If since his cousin's arrival she interested him less than before on the romantic side of his disposition, he appreciated her services in his business more every day. She had got thoroughly to understand his ways, to anticipate his mode of transacting business, to write in what he thought was his style. Always willing, cheerful, and disinterested, she was able by her industry to reconcile his own love of method and precision, and eager pursuit of the vocation he had assumed, with his natural indolence, aggravated as that failing now was by his present distraction. Little by little, the plan on which he first set out of prescribing his secretary's work for the day by written memoranda had given way to verbal in-

structions. Miss Reid would usually come into his room of a morning after he had breakfasted, summoned thither by Jane or Simmonds—she would never enter it without an express invitation—and he would make over to her the letters of the day, on which she would take down brief notes for their disposal, sitting the while opposite to him at the round table, or perhaps standing by the fire and making a table of the mantelpiece, while he lounged in his easy-chair. If at any time during the day she needed further instructions, she would send word by the servant,—Miss Reid's compliments, and could he make it convenient to look in at the office? while if he received during the day any letters needing reply, he would either ask her to come to him or take them into her room. And on returning after a walk or visit, he generally looked into "the office" to see if she wanted anything. The reserve about their communication, which had been established at first, was no longer maintained. They would have long consultations together on his various building and other projects; and except that she never entered his room without first sending a message, Miss Reid came and went, and business was carried on just as if she had been a man clerk, till Clifford sometimes used to think that he wished she were more of a woman.

"My aunt and cousin have just been paying me a visit," he said, entering Miss Reid's room after he had seen his visitors into their carriage. "I had quite a business to keep them from coming in here."

Miss Reid was standing up, and her manner was less calm and collected than usual, as if she had heard what had passed.

"They have only just come to England," he continued; "this is their first visit. My aunt is by way

of being a great manager. She would be sure to—to criticise our arrangements if she knew of them, so I thought it better not to introduce you to her."

"You will do as you think best, of course." The words came out with some hesitation; the young lady looked distressed; and while Clifford enjoyed the idea that she should thus be sharing in a mystery with him, he could not but be sensible of the degradation to her involved in the position. And how far pleasanter it would be, he thought, if she could meet him on terms of equality. How delightful to have a woman friend with whom to be on such intimate terms, yet about whom there need be no mystery or concealment. If Miss Reid were in his cousin's place, for example. And as the days went on, he found himself often comparing the two, and trying to analyse the difference in his feelings towards them. If his cousin had not been a relative, still more if there had not been an inextricable bond to draw them together, he would probably never have thought seriously about her as a wife, or have done more than pay the passing tribute of admiration to her beauty, which every one must do who saw her. But Clifford was in that position which we may suppose crowned heads to occupy whose marriages are determined by policy, and who, being allowed little choice, are bound to seek for happiness by trying to force their inclinations to follow their necessities. His cousin's beauty fascinated him the more because he felt that he had a sort of property in it, while he was ready to set down the petulance and rudeness she was in the habit of displaying towards him to the exigencies of her position. "If I am tormented with doubts," he would say to him-

self, "whether I really desire to fulfil the compact, how much more has she not cause to resent the conditions imposed on her? She has, at any rate, her radiant beauty to bestow on me; but what have I to offer in exchange? What is there in me for a woman to fall in love with? Naturally this beautiful creature, so petted, and the object of so much admiration and attention, feels the greatness of the sacrifice which she is called on to make. She would be less womanly and lovable if she did not exhibit these signs of revolt. Far from resenting her manner towards me, I ought rather to respect her for such feminine remonstrance. And am I not in reality a selfish fellow in holding her to the bargain? If I were disinterested in the matter, I might see that it should be a smaller sacrifice in me to surrender my fortune, than for her to give herself to a man she does not care for, especially a man so poorly endowed with qualities attractive to women." Thus Clifford in his humility sought excuses for his cousin, while the general outcome of his reflections was a determination to do his best to fall really in love with her, and to try to reconcile her to the idea of having him for a husband. Love, even on one side only, would be better than mutual indifference.

Yet, while trying to concentrate his thoughts upon his cousin, he could not keep them from sometimes wandering away to draw comparisons between her and his secretary, often involuntarily made to the advantage of the latter. Although her life and antecedents were still as much shrouded in mystery as on the first day of their acquaintance, all shade of suspicion had long passed away from his mind. The better he came to know her, the more he found reason to like and

respect her. She worked for him no longer so much as a paid servant as a trusted friend, whose tastes and sympathies were in unison with his own: each day improved the understanding between them. With his cousin, on the other hand, he did not feel that he was making much progress towards real intimacy; while the more they were together, the more he became sensible how little they had in common. She did not talk much at any time when they were alone, and what she did say was all about persons, not things,—the mere gossip of the hour, about which poor Clifford knew nothing. And fascinated though he was, he never found himself at ease in her society, or able to talk freely himself, whereas with Miss Reid he could rattle away by the hour together. But then the talk with her was always about things in which both were interested—for she entered thoroughly into the spirit of his pursuits and aspirations, and would now even venture sometimes to criticise his plans, with a playful delicacy which he found very winning. From Blanche, on the other hand, he had studiously concealed his aims in life, knowing instinctively that in her they would awaken no responsive enthusiasm. And indeed Clifford could not but be aware, that if his cousin should bring herself to share his fortune, there would need to be an entire change in the mode of its appropriation. With so expensive a wife as she would be, the available margin for its present uses would be but small: he would have to give up the schemes and occupations which were now so attractive and engrossing. But then, again, as he conjured up the picture of a luxurious home, to be shared with this beautiful creature, suitable to her claims and expectations, a sudden revulsion of feeling would

possess him, and the drudgery and commonplace details involved in the present mode of spending his fortune would for the time become absolutely repulsive. Perhaps it was the very quietude of his life, so far, that gave him now and then an impulse to sow some wild oats—to throw aside his books and papers and charitable schemes, and make a plunge into a life of idleness and pleasure. But the charm of having his secretary for a coadjutor—the subtle sense of sweetness of daily contact with her, of which, notwithstanding his infatuation for his cousin, he became daily more conscious—acted to restrain him. The aspect of such glimpses of an idle life as he caught in his visits to Charles Street, tended further in the same way. They were, in truth, but glimpses: his cousin was too much occupied to be able to receive him often. The expectations, indeed, which his aunt and cousin had formed of admission to the fashionable world were not realised to the extent they had looked for. They had been duly presented by the Countess of Chertsey, and the Countess had left cards on Mrs Scallan, but did not descend from her carriage, and when the visit was returned was not at home. Shortly afterwards came another card for Mrs and Miss Scallan, with an announcement that the Countess would be at home on a certain evening; and Clifford, who had also received a card for the same entertainment, issued no doubt at the instance of his friend Burrard, escorted the ladies thither. Together they mounted the staircase; and receiving a distant bow from a lady at the top of it, whom they inferred to be the giver of the entertainment, passed on into the crowded room beyond, and struggling therein, made their way to the other

end. Clifford, who could not divest himself of an uncomfortable sensation that every one was looking at him—whereas in truth he was absolutely unnoticed—felt as if he were in some way to blame for not being able to answer his aunt's repeated inquiries who the different people were. He could have wished, too, that his aunt's remarks were made in a lower tone, and had afforded less apparent amusement to those immediately round them. The crowd was too dense to admit of Blanche's beauty being fully seen: the young lady's mortification at being unnoticed was obvious; and she was only partially mollified when Captain Burrard came up just as they were leaving the house, and apologised in an airy way for not having found them out sooner. To Mrs Scallan, however, admission on any terms to so aristocratic a scene was matter of delight; and to her nephew's remark, as they drove home, that one such entertainment was enough for him, she retorted snubbingly that he could not expect to get to enjoy such society all at once, although admitting parenthetically her surprise at the smallness of the rooms. The drawing-rooms in many of the houses in Fifth Avenue were as big, if not bigger. When Clifford called the next day, the lady was dilating on the same subject to some visitors—friends who were stopping at the Langham Hotel, Mrs Cornelius B. Spurlin and her daughter, who also had been presented at the drawing-room, by the American Minister. In fact, there usually were visitors in the house whenever Clifford came to it,—mostly from the Langham Hotel; but also a sprinkling of young men, friends of Burrard—for the young English beauty from New York was beginning to be talked about, and had even been mentioned by name in one of the

society journals, a copy of which was kept on the drawing-room table by Mrs Scallan, open at the page which contained the notice ; and in a certain way the two were being floated along on the outer edge of the whirlpool of the London season. But Clifford noticed that the men had all the same free-and-easy manners as Burrard, without the *bonhomie* and good-nature which carried them off with him, and that his aunt's list of fashionable acquaintances was limited almost entirely to the masculine gender. The riding still went on, but only intermittently, —for Blanche, keeping late hours, was not often down in time ; and when they did ride out together, she was soon surrounded by a troop of cavaliers, and the conversation would assume a tone of badinage, more frank and sprightly than humorous or witty, in which the young lady certainly held her own, but for taking a part in which Clifford had no aptitude. Nor was he called upon to do so : at such times he would be quite unnoticed. He did not want for invitations to visit at the house,—indeed his aunt was so pressing that he might have lunched and dined in Charles Street every day that the ladies were disengaged. But when he did accept an invitation they were never alone ; and more often he refused, taking umbrage at his cousin's manner, although always ready to find an apology for her treatment of him in his own social insignificance.

But although Blanche thus kept him at a distance, while yet careful to afford him just so much encouragement as might prevent an absolute rupture, her feelings towards him had undergone a sensible change. The episode of the hat and cloak had, in fact, raised him considerably in her estimation. It was not for nothing that the young lady had read French

novels. She had at once put her own construction on the appearance of those garments in his chambers ; while as she had never referred to the subject, he had never been given the opportunity of setting her right. That her cousin should have a secret of this sort seemed to Miss Scallan but natural—indeed, proper—for a man in his circumstances. The notion of a husband who would have his own tastes and habits in these matters was much less disagreeable than that of the simple love-lorn swain she had hitherto been accustomed to consider her cousin. There would be a certain degree of pleasurable excitement, too, in cutting out a rival—for Miss Blanche was not without a vein of romantic sentiment, albeit not of a very elevated kind. Accordingly, although careful to prevent her cousin from making any advances in public which might give colour to the notion that he was to be an accepted lover, she was at times sufficiently gracious in manner to prevent him from being altogether discouraged,—appearing all the more attractive when in these moods, because they were so rare ; and it was with the appearance of quite meaning it that she expressed her pleasure at the proposal renewed by her cousin for a water-party on the river, and allowed him to fix a day. Her mother was hardly less pleased than her cousin ; for when she had ventured to press it privately on Blanche, urging that the season was passing away, and that her father might telegraph any day for news, the young lady had replied pettishly that it was ridiculous to think of wasting a whole day on such a dreary amusement as rowing about with Robert on the river. But before the expedition came off another one took place which must first be recorded.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE BALLOT.

SOME months have now passed since Parliament was prorogued, and there have been few extra-Parliamentary speeches made that can claim public attention. The Eastern question is fast becoming as great a political bore as Schleswig-Holstein was, to be classed with those recondite things which Lord Dundreary tells us "no man can understand." Although the Opposition are entering on the "winter of their discontent," the moor and the loch, the stubble and turnips, and the hunting-field, are admirable specifics to allay violent political excitement. We hear nothing of open-air demonstrations against the House of Lords. Even the Tichbornites have deserted Trafalgar Square and the Reformers' Tree. But for the Irish difficulty, the occupation of the writers of political leading articles would be gone. But while all political excitement, except in this direction, is for the moment abated, there are, we suspect, those who have political interests at heart of a very absorbing nature. Little more than eight months have passed since the election accounts were finally closed; and candidates, successful or defeated, begin to apprehend the distinction between the election expenses avowed and published, and the real expenditure. There are many reasons for this delay. In the first place, the managers of the elections, until the legal return has been made, are themselves in partial ignorance, or think that "where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise." All demands are put aside, and eyes and ears are shut until a decent time has elapsed, so that the tender consciences may not be wounded when the formal

statement is made. Meanwhile, the Finance Committees feel the pulse of their victims, and judge to what extent their patients will be able or willing to endure the phlebotomy and depletion of the political Sangrados. The local agents, on their part, are daily discovering fresh items to swell their bills of costs; for to no class of bills does Lord Lytton's maxim, that "bills, like trees, grow by standing," more justly apply. And all this time the candidates are lulled by delay into a false security—

"Alas! unmindful of their doom,
The little victims play."

The successful ones are, during their honeymoons of political life, indulging in dreams of possessing the disinterested affections of their constituencies. Probably since the election there has been a grand demonstration, when such generous sentiments were expressed, and such a flood of high-souled eloquence was poured forth, that it seemed impossible for any but the noblest and most patriotic motives to have influenced the votes of these vociferous patriots. So the future victim awaits the result, not without anxiety, but yet with confidence in his own merits and the affections of his supporters. He does not realise the "aliquid amari" of his success. So little at first is said about the expenses that he rests and is thankful—it is the calm that precedes the gale. Like Monsieur Jabot, "*il se remettre en position*,"—he is contemplating his successes, and planning his political campaign, when his pleasant dreams are dispelled by the receipt of some such letter as the following from the principal agent:

"MY DEAR SIR,—You will receive the greater part of the election accounts within the next week. I fear you will find that they greatly exceed the sum I mentioned to you when we had our first interview at the — Club. This arises from a variety of causes, which I will explain when we meet, but which it is not desirable to communicate by letter. Under ordinary circumstances the expenses might have been confined within the sum I named, but in many respects this has been an exceptional election. We have had a heavy purse against us, and you are to be congratulated on a magnificent triumph. Your name will ever be associated with the freedom of this ancient borough. And this proud position will, I trust, reconcile you to the unexpected increase of the expenditure."

Well, the bills do arrive, at least the larger part of them (for there are in general many omissions), and addenda are to be sent in due time; but without these the excess is reckoned by hundreds, sometimes by thousands, yet the sufferer does not dare to inquire how the money has been expended; and if information is required, it is of the vaguest and most unsatisfactory nature. All the remonstrances and expostulations elicit no other reply than, like a chorus in a Greek play—"Give, give, give." Such is the position in which the majority of those who aspire to have the magical letters M.P. affixed to their names find themselves some six or eight months after the contest.

How is this? it may well be asked; for the one great advantage promised by the advocates of the ballot was, that it would reduce the expenses of elections. Yet all the recent inquiries, and the state of many accounts with bankers, bear

testimony that the expenditure is as great as, if indeed it is not greater than, it was before the passing of the Ballot Act; the only difference is, that in most cases the money flows in a different channel. But this, after all, is unimportant to those who have to pay. Formerly it was a retail, now it is a wholesale, expenditure. The purse used to be subjected to homœopathic treatment; now it is exposed to one severe shock. The balance at the banker's ebbed away; now it is exhausted by large cheques. It is not as in those halcyon days for electors, £5 for a single vote, and £10 for a plumper; but good large sums are paid down for professional fees, which cover the secret disbursements. Every village possesses its little attorney, the meddler and muddler of the place,—these must all be retained by one party or the other. No one can define precisely what is their local influence, but neither side dare overlook it. It is the case of the *ignotum pro magnifico*. In general a few houses in the borough belong to them, and it is assumed that they can influence the occupiers; or they are fussy, bustling men, who take a prominent part at all local meetings, and are full of their own importance, at which estimate men are very frequently rated in life. Then the chief agent and manager appears on the scene. He requires a good round sum to be placed in the bank, but explains that under the ballot it will not be drawn out so rapidly as formerly. There are solicitors, who are the link between the attorneys and agents, who have to be interviewed. The candidate, as he experiences the tender mercies of these legal gentlemen, may recall Dr Johnson's definition of the difference between an attorney and a solicitor,—“The

same, sir, as there is between an alligator and a crocodile." The alligators and crocodiles have a good time of it under the ballot. Formerly, at any rate, they had to report every evening whom they had visited during the day, and the result of each day's canvass; and they were to a certain degree responsible for the votes of those put down as promises. Now they can enjoy themselves at the bar of the "Fountain" or "True Blue," "from eve to morn, from morn to dewy eve." If the attorney is a conscientious man, he may take an occasional stroll and say an encouraging word to a doubtful voter, but there is no longer payment by results. All he has to do now is to accumulate charges, pocket the money, and remain at home "to rest and be thankful." An observer need not be

"Difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti,"

to prefer the former to the latter style of electioneering, and to look back with something like regret on the old elections. The wild excitement, the reckless expenditure, and above all, the unscrupulous venality of the constituencies, was greatly to be lamented. The British Constitution was, in point of fact, the cause of a periodical saturnalia; but if it led to great abuses, at any rate the abuse was patent. It afforded amusement to many non-voters who were not in any way partakers in the rival benevolences showered upon the electors by the beneficent candidates. Moreover, there were occasionally benefits shared by all—general entertainments where the non-electors' wives and children were welcomed with their more fortunate fellow-citizens. And how many baths, wash-houses, fountains, reading-rooms, have not

owed their existence to hard-fought contests? The old election as contrasted with the new system, is Charles Surface as compared with Joseph. The British Constitution is now a whitened sepulchre. We have no longer the public nomination, the excitement of the poll. Except for a few public meetings and local associations, no one would be aware that an election was going on. As a stanch old remnant of bygone days expressed it, "There is no one to keep the steam up now." Outwardly he was right; but the steam, although not permitted to escape, is at high pressure all the same. There are still little back rooms in retired localities visited by mysterious strangers. Some months after elections householders reputed bankrupt are able to pay their rents, as well as the reckonings so long chalked up against them at the "Blue Posts." As for the attorney, soon after the contest he is in a position to present his wife and daughters with new dresses, and to take them a trip to the seaside. While, on the other hand, it frequently happens that the candidate, successful or otherwise, finds that the London house must be let, or the moor and snug little hunting-box at Market-Harborough given up. These are remarkable coincidences, which justify the ambiguous language of the managing agent.

But if the ballot has not led to greater economy, which certainly does not seem to be the case, then—corruption for corruption—the old system seems preferable to the present one, and we have gained little by the exchange of old lamps for new. The £5 for a single vote, and £10 for a plumper, was a simple proceeding, and at any rate it benefited the recipient. He did not feel demoralised by the transaction; in

many instances he thought that the money was a gratification, not a bribe. He was always "True Blue" or "Old Pink,"—the *douceur* only induced him to poll brisker and earlier than he otherwise would have done; he was such an enthusiastic admirer of the British Constitution, that he thought any one who desired to add M.P. to his name should pay well for that honour. It was all very well to preach the doctrine of purity, and to denounce electoral corruption; to tell him—

"Curst is the wretch that is bought and
sold,
And barter liberty for gold."

Neither the giver nor receiver seemed to feel that there was any moral harm in bribery; it was all fair if not found out. So a general election was a merry time for the borough,—for the voters flush of money, for ladies with their ribbons, for old men carrying the party flags, for the more active who vented their excitement in the streets by rival shoutings, and at times in pugilistic encounters, stimulated by beer—every one seemed to enjoy an election except the anxious candidates.

Yes, these were glorious times: there was no humbug about them. From the moment that a general election was announced, mysterious conferences were held at the Reform, at Brookes's, or the Carlton. The waiting-rooms and dining-rooms could not suffice for managers, button-holders, and wire-pullers,—all the Tapers and Tadpoles with their clients. At these secret meetings the destinies of counties, cities, and boroughs were decided. It must be admitted that the questions put by the promoters of elections bore less reference to the political opinions than to the pockets of the parliamentary aspirants. It might frequently happen that when the future statesman began to expatiate on his principles, he was curtly re-

minded that it was less a question of political views than of available money assets. "No army can take the field without a good commissariat, Mr Deposit," says Mr Taper. "Your principles are all right enough, but Muddleborough is an expensive place. There have been some desperate fights there, and the candidates did not stick at trifles. But it is a safe seat for a young active fellow who can pay. Mr Bagwell, the Whig candidate, has frequent fits of the gout, so you will start with a great advantage."—"No, I cannot tell you what the expense will be. Go down by the night mail. I will give you an introduction to the leading man on our side, Mr Skinner, and you will be able to arrange things with him. And if you determine to fight, take my advice, don't starve the election. Give with both hands,—I mean metaphorically, for, of course, you never hear a word about money, and you must forget that we have ever had this conversation. In six weeks I shall address you as M.P., and I will now telegraph to Skinner to expect you to-morrow morning. Goodbye:" so exit Deposit, who delights his mother and sisters with the information that a seat has been found for him. For in his family he is regarded as a rising Chatham. He takes his seat in the night mail for Muddleborough. On his arrival at the station he finds an enthusiastic crowd to welcome him, headed by a brass band, bannermen with new silk sashes and new banners, with the Queen, our Glorious Constitution, Church and State; and before he knows exactly where he is, the hope of the borough is pushed through the mob into a carriage, to which the museular Conservatives harness themselves, and he finds himself dragged in premature triumph to the hotel. Ladies are at all the windows, waving their hand-

kerchiefs, and wearing the Conservative colours. It is a glorious moment for Deposit. What nonsense to talk of corruption and bribery, amid all this hearty enthusiasm. Sure nothing ill can dwell in such a borough. Yes, it is true, that in former days there were few moments more exciting in life than the first reception of a young candidate. In spite of all that may have been said, there seems a reality about its expression; and to do the party justice, they warm into earnestness, and for the time the enthusiasm is sincere, or *si non e vero e ben trovato*. Unlimited beer leads to a deal of good fellowship. After such a burst of feeling, Deposit cannot doubt the issue, and when he appears at the window of the hotel, and utters his well-prepared sentences, he feels himself every inch a statesman. Mr Skinner—

“His guide, companion, counsellor, and friend,
While yet a dearer name remains behind;”

—truly dearer he will soon find it to be—closes the proceedings by declaring that the eyes of all Europe are fixed on Muddleborough, and talks of nailing the true blue colours to the mast. The excitement is so intense, that Deposit, if he had any hesitation, feels it is too late to draw back. There he is, for better or for worse, —he must go on now. His destiny is linked with that of Muddleborough. His faith must be rooted in Skinner and his friends.

Thus everything was *couleur de rose*, or rather *couleur de bleu*, until the arrival of the opponent, when it was impossible not to avoid a little mistrust, for it seemed as if on the sudden the colouring of the place had changed,—had faded

“opal-like away.” The blue had changed to pink; another band had sprung into existence, unless, indeed, it was the same band with other ribbons, playing the same triumphal march; the shouts for Bagwell, the friend of the people, the working man’s candidate, were as loud as they had been for Church and State only a few hours previously. As the cries rang in Deposit’s ears, he awoke from his dreams of an easy triumph into the stern reality of a hard fight. It was clearly a case of buckling on his armour. The free and independent electors were to have a good time of it—a regular hard battle—what a blessing for the patriots who for the two last elections had seen a walk over! The place is in a ferment. The writ would not arrive before the end of the week, so there still was a fortnight to the polling,—a fortnight of speeches, washed down by quarts of ale. The public will be crowded with the sturdy patriots who nightly expound their principles over the frothing tankards. These are the libations which are poured forth on the constitutional altars of the country. And they constitute the strongest appeals which can be made to the electoral body.

But for the candidate there is real business to be done. Mr Deposit is invited to meet the committee presided over by Mr Skinner, actually sitting in solemn conclave in a back room of the Blue hotel. He is soon given to understand that the election was likely to be an expensive one. Trade was very bad, and unfortunately the last candidate had promised to build a town hall, and had not even laid the foundation stone. Then there were certain claims of the last election that had never been settled;—altogether the

prospect was not so cheerful as it seemed on the preceding morning. There was less of public principle talked of, and consequently, at a subsequent private interview with Mr Skinner, Deposit learnt that whatever the powers of his eloquence, it would require a good round sum before he could hope to realise his ambitions or dreams. Everything was disagreeably vague. Mr Skinner could not state any amount. He hoped, however, that it would not exceed three thousand. And what was three thousand as the foundation of a political career?

"We shall commence our canvass early to-morrow," says Mr Skinner. "It must be a house-to-house canvass; and many of the electors will require to be called on three or four times. And I regret to say that the more they require a little private interviewing, the more they expect to be treated as men of strong convictions, who never desert their principles, and always stick to their colours." "And how long will it take to canvass the borough, Mr Skinner?" "Well, at ten hours a day you may get through it in a week, but it is hard work." But this is not quite what Mr Deposit expected, and his enthusiasm begins rapidly to abate, only Mr Skinner left him no doubt of ultimate success—was it not all written in his book? So many names had been added to the Register since the last election by the Conservatives, that the result was a foregone conclusion. The only unfortunate circumstance was, that if Asmodeus had unroofed Muddleborough that evening, Mr Bagwell and his friends would have been found deep in calculation, and arriving at the same satisfactory results. This could only be accounted for by mistrusting the integrity of the

electors: was it possible that these free and enlightened voters should have promised both sides? Nothing is more remarkable in a hard contest than the confidence assumed by all concerned. Lord Chatham said that "confidence is a plant of slow growth." It is not so in boroughs, where "hope springs eternal in the human breast." And this is certainly the case with candidates, who always view their prospects through the medium of party agent's magnifying glasses.

But let us accompany young Deposit and the astute Mr Skinner in their canvass the next morning. The working committee meet at the hotel, beaming with importance and excitement; some held lists of the district voters; others were, by their presence, supposed to exercise some influence; a few attended that they might be taken into account on the settling day: they were all marshalled in due order. Book and pencil in hand, the march commences. At the first few houses there is no result, the electors have gone to their work, and the wives don't seem disposed to give much information. "My man will do just as he pleases," says some strong-minded and loud female. The observation caused a smile, for it was not generally supposed that "my man" ever did as he liked, unless his liking happened to suit his vigorous helpmate. All this seemed to Deposit very like labour lost: it certainly was not reassuring. At last a small tradesman was found at home; and after the usual introduction of the candidate by Mr Skinner as a young gentleman of great promise who had arrived to rescue the borough from the tyranny of the Radical party, Mr Skinner presumed to slap the free and inde-

pendent tailor on the shoulder, and to express his conviction that "Stitcher" was a True Blue. "We may depend on little Stitcher, Mr Deposit." "Well, Mr Skinner," replies the tailor, "I am not so sure of that. It is quite true that them Blue are my principles, but ——" "But! what do you mean? I told Mr Deposit he could put you down as a promise. Your father was always a Blue." "So he was, Mr Skinner—so he was; and much good it did him. We lost a number of customers, all Pinks, who we used to make for; and the Blues never seemed to wear out their clothes—scarcely a new coat a-year among them. Every man must look after himself, Mr Skinner.

"I am a little tailor what has great
pain
My wife and family to maintain."

My principles goes with my work." "All right," says Mr Skinner; "I will have a talk with you by-and-by." At this Stitcher smiled very amiably. Mr Skinner smiled. All the intelligence department of the canvassers had the smile reflected on their countenances. It was quite clear that, after the private conversation, Stitcher would be as stanch a Blue as his father. This process of extorting promises was renewed with certain modifications at every house where the occupier was to be found at home; but the result could not be considered satisfactory. Frequently little more could be obtained than "There is plenty of time yet;" "You will know where to find me on the polling-day, Mr Skinner." In general, however, the conversations ended in the usual request for a private interview. At the close of the day's canvass, poor Deposit felt himself becoming a political Bob Acres, and that his courage was ooz-

ing out at all pores. He had lost all his confidence; for there were little more than a tenth of the constituency canvassed, and scarcely a tenth of these could be depended on as Blues. Nor was Mr Skinner better pleased; for as the owner of a great many houses, this was the periodical opportunity for his tenants to give him what they called a bit of their mind, —fully aware, however indignant he might be, he would be compelled to remit their rents, or satisfy them in some other way before the polling-day. "Well, Mr Skinner, I am glad to see you," said Mrs Suds, as she continued her washing. "I have not time to turn round, but I know what you are come about. You won't get no promise here. You are a hard landlord, Mr Skinner—you knows that; and at the last election you promised to get little Bill into the Blue-coat school. Yes, you did. He is in the school, you say; so he be. And who put him in? Why, the Pinks, to be sure. No, no; it is of no use talking of the honour of the country; both the honour of the country! I looks to my five children; they be my politics; and my politics are my man's." Yes, it was quite true. Mr Deposit found that in most cases the wives kept the political consciences of the husbands. And the opinion of the tap-room was the echo of the domestic hearth.

All this was a sad revelation to the young politician. He had made up his mind that a seat in Parliament would cost a large sum; but he had never realised the obvious manner in which the money was to be expended. He began to agree with a remark he had met with in 'Piccadilly,'—a work which he had read, not once, but many times, so pregnant is it with thought

and feeling,—that “voters are like cards, the more you deal with them the dirtier they seem.” As far as he could judge, it appeared to be a matter of profound indifference what his views on important political subjects were. What was the use of all his study of constitutional history, when no one asked him any questions as to his political views, and it was clearly a matter of cautious manipulation of voters and of their consumption of beer? That evening not even the sanguine assurances of Mr Skinner, or the soft strains of the brass band and the *grosse caisse*, which insisted on playing under his window, were able to soothe his nervous system. “Shadows, clouds, and darkness” seemed to rest on his political prospects. The only thing he felt certain of was, that these private interviews between Mr Skinner and these patriotic electors were likely to lead to a great reduction of his balance at the banker’s. Nor was his confidence restored by the following day’s experience; indeed it was rather weakened, for many more unpleasant remarks were made in Mr Skinner’s presence which were by no means complimentary to that gentleman, when Deposit was advised by an elector bolder than usual “to look well after his pockets while he was surrounded by so many land-sharks.” It was, he feared, a case of *quis custodiet ipsos custodes*. Skinner he looked to for protection against the multitude; but who was to protect him against Skinner? On such occasions the canvassing party would terminate the conversation very abruptly, and even the most sanguine did not assume confidence in being able to gain so malignant a voter. But each day’s work did not terminate with the canvass. Every evening on his return, foot and heart

weary, poor Deposit was expected to address the crowd from the window of the hotel, and to express the most unbounded confidence in the result of his canvass,—only, unfortunately, his opponent’s house was nearly opposite, and at every pause in his speech he could hear counter-assertions as strong as his own, while the mob cheered impartially and good-humouredly. The result did not matter to them. At any rate, it was a grand fight; and if only it would be a close election, Muddleborough, like Danae, might be wooed by a shower of gold before the election was over. If the general tariff was fives and tens, it was quite possible it might increase before the poll to twice or thrice that amount; so the shrewd ones thought it better to play a waiting game. And it soon became apparent that even the private interviews with Mr Skinner would fail to obtain the promises he had promised Deposit, who felt himself in the uncomfortable situation of a mountaineer when he finds his footing very precarious, and that it is equally perilous to advance or to recede. To retire from the contest was at once to kill out any hope of political life. All the ambitions of his youth, “the applause of listening senates to command,” which he had so eagerly hoped for,—all these visions of boyhood would vanish for ever; while, on the other hand, even defeat was not incompatible with a political future. Retreat would never be pardoned; and yet it was now clear that success could only be secured at a great sacrifice,—and indeed there might be a great sacrifice and no success. His was truly a cruel position, which Skinner shrewdly guessed, and did his best to encourage him. “We must go in and win now, Mr Deposit. It

will never do for you to be beaten. What are a few hundreds to defeating Bagwell? It will be a proud day when you appear at the head of the poll."

"But if we have a petition, Mr Skinner?"

"Oh, never mind a petition; we know what we are about. You get the seat, and then you may defy them to do their worst."

And so it went on. There were secret conferences from day to day: voters slinking into little dark rooms; mysterious strangers coming and going,—until, on the eve of the polling-day, when the lists were made up, and it was clear that, under the most favourable calculations, thirty more votes were necessary to win the election, then some one in Skinner's confidence was smuggled into a room where forty of the pure and incorruptible Muddleboroughians were assembled: these had signed a paper to vote *en masse* if their political views were agreed to. These views were represented by the two opened hands of the faithful messenger being held up three times. The movement was as simple and significant as Lord Burghley's famous shake of the head. Every one seemed satisfied. Glasses of punch were then passed round; and the silence was succeeded by three cheers for Deposit—cheers warm as the grog they were drinking. So loud were they, that a party of Bagwells, who were on a similar errand bent, discovered that they were too late—"too late! too late! They cannot enter now;" or if they could penetrate into this mysterious chamber, it would be in vain—for is there not honour among patriots as well as thieves? The next day, about three o'clock, parties were evenly balanced,—the excitement at fever-

heat. Suddenly appear, as a compact band, the gallant forty, marching to their public duty, arm in arm, some not having quite recovered from the potations of the previous night. It seemed that, in the performance of a great public duty, they cared not to declare their opinions by sporting any colours: they were, however, well known. And the boys shouted as they drew near the booth, "Here come the forty!" Some cynic in the crowd called them the "Forty Thieves," but was bonneted for uttering a sentiment so opposed to the best interests of the borough. Bagwell's agent, Flint, was pale with anger; Skinner's countenance was radiant. Loyal forty! One and all, in answer to the poll-clerk's question, "Who do you vote for?" answered, "Deposit." Cheer succeeded cheer. Skinner tossed his hat in the air. Four o'clock struck,—the poll was closed. The crowd rushed to the Town Hall, whither the mayor had retired, and in half an hour appeared to make the declaration of the poll. Bagwell, 410; Deposit, 445,—the forty had done it.

One of our great northern magnates, whose family has expended not one fortune, but many fortunes, on elections, was heard to express the opinion that no one had experienced the intenseness of real excitement until he had fought a hard election contest. This is, of course, greatly diminished since the ballot. Now the progress of the voting is unknown, and both sides are in ignorance of the state of the poll until it is declared. Formerly, it not unfrequently happened that the numbers were equal throughout the day, when each unpolled voter, if not worth his weight in gold, was worth much more gold than he was the previous day, if he appeared at the booth at the critical moment. In

former elections, amid the confusion of cheers, brass bands, bell-ringers, and the universal uproar, it was frequently difficult to tell the exact state of the poll. The poll-clerks, in their excitement or from partisanship, counted irregular or disputed votes; and each side sometimes claimed the majority—well aware that the waverers and waiters on Providence always enlist in the *gros bataillons*, and follow Mr Pickwick's advice, "to shout with the loudest." Occasionally it was so close that the agents, and even the returning officers, were wrong in their additions, and the decision of the latter had to be reversed. This occurred in 1846, when Mr Romilly opposed Mr Baillie Cochrane at Bridport, who had resigned his seat in consequence of the support he gave Sir Robert Peel on the repeal of the Corn Laws, and sought re-election. On that occasion, as early as nine o'clock the numbers were equal. At ten o'clock the candidates tied again; and so on, neck and neck, throughout the day. When, at a quarter to four, it was supposed that Mr Romilly was one in the majority, the crowd made a dash to the polling-booth; the mayor, the agents, the clerks, were all swept away, and retreated into the Town Hall, where the declaration of the poll was to be made. The Conservative candidate, defeated, as he and every one supposed, demanded an interview with the mayor, to protest against the irregularity of closing the poll before the legal hour of four, when his worship, in a state of great confusion, requested that no notice should be taken of this illegality, as the numbers had been added wrong, and the majority of one was in Mr Cochrane's favour. This explanation was interrupted by the enthusiastic cheers of the

mob, who were going through the form of chairing Mr Romilly. So confident had his party been of success, that the magnificent velvet chair was ready prepared; and instead of adopting the usual course—of postponing the time-honoured, and, for the candidate, somewhat perilous ceremonial, to the next day—Mr Romilly was compelled at once to ascend the giddy eminence, and, borne on the shoulders of eight enthusiastic and very unsteady supporters, preceded by the brass band playing "See the conquering hero comes," and followed by a delighted legion of boys, stopped opposite the Town Hall to give three grateful cheers for the mayor who had beat such a timely retreat, when suddenly his worship appeared on the balcony, claimed silence, and, to the utter confusion of the chaired, the chairmen, band, and mob, made the announcement that Mr Baillie Cochrane was duly elected to serve in Parliament. It may be supposed that after this announcement there was a universal *saute qui peut*. Not a bit of it. As the story goes, the constituency was equal to the occasion: they were not going to be done out of their fun, so the candidates exchanged places. *Arcades ambo*. Mr Romilly took his place in the chaise which was ready for the unsuccessful candidate, who did not care to be kept awake all night by the triumphant cheers of his rival's followers. Mr Cochrane ascended the chair. The same chair-bearers continued their services, the same band played a triumphal march, the same mob cheered. The ribbons alone were changed—the blue colours, instead of the red, fluttered in the air. It was a novelty in election experience—two triumphs for the same seat on the same day.

A change has come over the spirit of elections. "Our revels now are ended." No more of this intense excitement—this glorious uncertainty. No colours, few ribbons. Brass bands are silent. Even the small boys cease to cheer, and there is scarcely energy left to chalk the walls with, "True Blue (or Pink) for ever." The poorer class of voters may mourn over the past. For them the election

"Sports are fled, and all their charms withdrawn."

They may exclaim, with the lamented Augustus Stafford, "There is no old True Blue now." Since the ballot, all things are changed. A thriving election business is still carried on, but it is not in the same hands. We have done with nomination days, when the candidates had to be pilloried before the mob, fortunate if they were not overwhelmed with rotten eggs and various products of the market-place, where the hustings were generally erected, and happy frequently to escape without broken bones. No rival processions now take possession of the High Street, and keep the town alive by smashing windows and breaking heads. Timid voters are permitted to poll without, on leaving the polling-booth, finding themselves hustled and jostled into a jelly by one of the rival parties. A dull, gloomy, melancholy event is an election under the ballot. Indeed, but for the anxious, absorbed countenances of all interested in it, no one could tell that an election was going on. The ballot has led to this change—and so far, it must be admitted that it is a change for the better; but in all other respects it cannot be denied

that the ballot has grievously disappointed its supporters. There is no change for the better in the inner life of elections, as even all the real evils have been increased, unless it be, according to Mr Burke's dictum, that "Hypocrisy is the homage that vice pays to virtue." It is the case of "whited sepulchres;" but even the white has been washed off these sepulchres by the recent election trials. Nomination days, processions, &c., might, by more stringent laws, have all been got rid of without the ballot. The ballot was strongly supported not only by the Liberals, but by many Conservatives,* for the sake of stopping bribery. It was thought, and reasonably so, that no one would think it worth while to bribe a voter when it was impossible to tell how he voted—indeed, when he might take money from both sides and deceive both; and that, bribery done away with, the cost of elections would be reduced to a very small amount. Experience has now shown that the result is very different, and that the cost of elections has materially increased.

Some of the revelations made before the recent Election Commissions are indeed extraordinary in their extravagance. Lord Bra-bourne has admitted that the election at Sandwich in April last was not contested, for the simple reason that no Conservative could be found to pay £5000 for such an uncertainty; and yet he describes the constituency as "absolutely pure," and the inhabitants as a "most honest race of men;" and it seems that in this scene of purity, this sweet Auburn borough of Arcadian simplicity—amid these honest men

* Nearly half a century since, Sir Arthur Elton published a pamphlet entitled "The Ballot a Conservative measure."

—Mr Brassey had spent £25,000 in two elections. But read the evidence of ballot purity given by Mr Crompton Roberts. Again the scene is placed in pure, incorruptible Sandwich. Mr Roberts was told the seat would cost £10,000, and did not consider that amount out of the way to get a seat in Parliament. Mr Crompton Roberts must have astonished these unsophisticated inhabitants by his liberal expenditure. £50 a-day bill at the hotel was nothing to Mr Roberts ; and the guileless publican let him off easy, for he might as easily have charged a hundred. Like Clive, he must, after hearing Mr Roberts's evidence, have marvelled at, and indeed regretted, his moderation. But if these deeds are done among the pure and honest Deal men, what may not have occurred, or may not hereafter chance, in other places? Curious incidents seem to have taken place at all the towns which have been honoured by the presence of the Election Commissioners—notably at Macclesfield, where, out of a constituency of 5900, it is stated that 4000 voters were bribed. At Evesham, George Nuthall, registration agent to the Birmingham Liberal Association, admitted that he received £350. "He had £12 a week for miscellaneous expenses, besides board and lodgings, £30 for travelling expenses, and 150 guineas as fee. Of all these amounts, only £50 was returned in the account published." Well may it be questioned what good the ballot has done, and whether it is wise to renew the Act next Session. One of the Commissioners at Boston put the question to an important witness—"I will ask you, as I have asked other experts, whether the ballot has conferred any benefit on the country, and if it is wise to renew it?" The reply was—

"After my experience of the last election, my confidence in the ballot is much shaken." All expectations of purity of election have been disappointed, and under the ballot it is more difficult than it was to detect bribery. It is abundantly evident that, notwithstanding the magnitude of the education grant, the people are not yet educated into a sense of their duties as citizens. The ballot having been tried only as an experiment,—as it has not led to purity of election, or rendered it easier or cheaper to obtain a seat in the House of Commons—as it has failed in both respects,—even its most earnest advocates on either side of the House may deem it well to pause before the renewing of the Act. The ballot should not be considered as a party question. So far as party interests are concerned, these are pretty fairly balanced. If by secret voting tenants are able to record their votes in opposition to the views of their landlords without fear of consequences, so also the working-men are independent of the grinding tyranny of their taskmasters and overseers, and are secure from the pains and penalties to which they were formerly subjected when they differed from their employers: they are no longer to be seen, in large manufacturing districts, actually driven to the polling-booth like sheep. In this respect the ballot is undeniably an improvement. But it must be admitted that the great argument of the opponents of the ballot, that it tends to lower the standard of honour and truthfulness, has been greatly strengthened by the evidence given before the late Election Commissions. Cicero says of the ballot, that it "enables men to open their faces, and to cover up their thoughts; it gives them licence to

promise whatever they are asked, and at the same time to do whatever they please." And his opinion is justified by the late elections. Witness after witness has been compelled to own to having taken bribes from both sides. It was hoped and expected by all candidates, that the stream of electoral corruption would have been dried up under the new dispensation, instead of which the flow of Pactolus is more rapid than ever; and any candidate who hopes to insure success, must plunge into it like Midas. The temptation to take a bribe is also greater than ever, because it is more difficult to trace the connection between the vote and the bribe: indeed, there is the temptation to take a bribe from both sides. It is not the case of Captain Macheath—

"How happy could I be with either,
Were t'other dear charmer away,"—

but of gaining the affections of both charmers at once, then tossing up which is to be preferred, or perhaps throwing both over. Nothing can be more demoralising than this state of things. It is a premium for falsehood, and teaches men to live lives of dissimulation. The evil has proved to be far greater than was anticipated by the strongest opponent of the ballot, and it is evident that if truth may be found at the bottom of a well, it is certainly not to be found in the ballot box. Jestling Pilate asked, "What is truth?" It may be replied, that it is the greatest bond of all societies, for deceit and suspicion are the offspring of falsehood. No analogy can be drawn from any other country as to the working of the ballot, for in no other country is so much anxiety expressed to become a representative. And nowhere else are such enormous sums

expended on elections. In the United States we sometimes hear of a great electoral expenditure; but we must decline to cross the Atlantic in search of examples of public probity.

But, ballot or no ballot, there is little doubt that bribery might be checked if the Legislature were in earnest,—if the inner convictions on the subject were really in harmony with the outward expression. But even those who in public are loud in denouncing the profligacy of corrupting electors, will in private tell excellent stories of their election experiences, and the clever tactics they pursued. There is only one way to elevate the standard of electoral morality—that is, by making it a disgraceful act to violate it. If any agent, sub-agent, member of the candidate's committee, or any one seen personally canvassing with him, on conviction of bribery, or of promising any bribe, directly or indirectly, were liable to imprisonment in the common jail for a period not less than six months, and not more than two years after one or two convictions, elections would be very differently conducted; and, moreover, bribery would then be stigmatised as shameful. We should like to see a few of those gentlemen who are so liberal in spending others' money, and who, while they talk of their principles, have only one idea of a dissolution—that it is a providential opportunity for extortion—taking their place, with cropped hair, in the exercise-yard of Pentonville. And why should any agents be permitted? If their employment were made illegal, the Skinners and Flints would disappear. Here, however, is the difficulty. Who is sufficient for these things? Where is the Curtius who will devote himself to the public

good? Who will bell the cat? What chance would any candidate have of being returned after he had proposed to do away with agents, or to subject them to the pains and penalties above mentioned,—what hope would he have of ever being a successful candidate in any borough? Agents, local solicitors, attorneys, consider that they possess a vested right in the spoils of election contests. The advocates of purity at elections have, moreover, to contend against an influence so difficult to overthrow,—the interests of the great cotton princes. The magnates of our commerce are as eager to obtain seats in Parliament as were the nabobs of the last century. On hearing of £25,000 spent in two contests, we may apply to the present day the language of Lord Chatham, when he denounces the torrent of corruption which no private hereditary fortune can resist: only instead of the “spoils of distant provinces,” it is the accumulations of fortunate speculators, which in these days “purchase the votes of electoral bodies, incapable of dis-

charging, or even of understanding, their increased responsibilities.” To wage war successfully against such powers of evil is no light matter, and can only be carried to a successful conclusion by the strong will of a strong Government; and even the strongest Government must be unwilling to alienate the whole venal tribe who govern the constituencies. The Peers, who can afford to incur the odium of reforming these abuses, may feel themselves justified in making an effort to reform the House of Commons in this most essential particular. But such an interference might be regarded with great jealousy by the Commons. The only hope is, that the recent elections will make the chiefs of both parties more alive to the necessity of improving the quality of the present electoral body, rather than of adding to its quantity; and that the day may come when those who offer as well as those who accept bribes, will find themselves subjected to the severest penalties, and justly condemned by an enlightened public opinion.

THE BISHOP ASTRAY.

[A BISHOP having preached with effect on the Sunday in the rural parish of Winford, has set forth on the Monday to ride through the wood to Winbeach, where he is to open a church. He has sent his man and his luggage by train; and, as the way is not long and the day exceeding fair, he rides along on a bridle-path. Ambling easily, he permits himself to be soothed by the sweet air of spring.]

How sweet the air is! It is an old saying—but oh, how profoundly true!—that the renewal of the year suggests alway the renewal of youth. The memory of childhood's hours is strangely clear with me to-day. That looks a delightful seat; Nature seems to have prepared a throne for me in the forest; I should like to get off and try it. And why should I not? I have abundance of time. Whoa! Steady, old horse, while I dismount. Good Robin! There you are securely fastened; and now—yes; the seat is most excellent. Ha! what a change from the saddle!—capacious, soft, delightful! I think I may venture to lay aside my hat; the air is so soft that I have no fear of taking cold; this glade is so secluded that surely I need not hesitate to lay aside my dignity for the moment—(*he lays aside his hat.*) Memories of my careless, wayward boyhood throng thick upon me. What a climber I was! I should have been up among the branches in those days, not sitting among the roots. And I have climbed since then; I have risen to some eminence;—yes. I can afford an idle hour—an hour of sitting lowly amid the gnarled roots. Wouldn't it be better if I leaned a little more back?—yes, that's much better; there is nothing derogatory in a recumbent position: after all, there is no luxury like that which simple Nature prepares for us in the sweet woodland ways—that's pretty; quite a

poetical expression: how fond I was of poetry when I was a boy! Dear me, it must be a long time since I have read any poetry! No, no; by the by, there was that admirable volume dedicated to me by Canon Pipoon; I read it with the greatest interest; it was full of most valuable thought and feeling—a very valuable book for these days—as I remember I told him. As poetry—I wonder what Susan would have thought of the Canon's poetry. I fear she would have laughed at it; even I myself might have laughed in those days. Certainly it was a very different sort of poetry which we used to shout about the wood. Our wood at home was very like this. As I lie here and look up into the clouds of young yellow oak-leaves swimming in yellow light, I can almost fancy myself a heedless boy again, at home with sister Susan—poor sister Susan!

It makes me sigh that I must enjoy my eminence alone. Poor girl! How romantic she was, how foolishly romantic; and how bitterly she was punished! I wonder what became of her husband, that accurs—that unhappy fiddler,—and of the boy and girl? It is strange how little I have thought of them of late years. I have been very busy; the cares of my high office—and besides, I exhausted every means of finding them; and beyond the bare notice of their mother's death, I could find noth-

ing. Poor Susan!—How soft and drowsy is this fertile air! Delicious repose! Yes, there is a certain stiffness about the poetry of Canon Pipoon, a constraint—there is something which interferes with my ease. I fancy that I am somewhat tightly braced; really this spot is so strictly private, that I might almost venture; “*dulce est desipere in*”—that is, surely there is no harm. I think I may venture on a little relaxation. (*He loosens his apron.*) Ah! that is good. I feel young and light at heart as a boy. O boyhood, happy, careless boyhood! O—ow!! There must

be a stone in my boot. I have a busy time before me; it will never do for me to be lame. I ought to take my boot off.—Tut! Dear, dear! What have I done? It’s in the other boot. I must have that off too. How nice and cool for the feet! It is an excellent thing to have one’s boots off for a little while. I think I have read somewhere that on campaigns—yes.

(*So the Bishop lies on his back, and wags a free foot in the air; soon he begins to hum, and after a little the vague humming passes into song.*)

“O many the leaves of the summer trees,
And they tremble to all the airs;
O many the lights on the summer seas
Wherever a sunbeam flares;
A myriad answer the sun,
But my love loves but one;
The breeze loves many, but none my one love shares.”

Let me see: how does it go on? “Young Kate is as—as proud as”—as what? Dear, dear, what rubbish it is! It must be twenty years since I have thought of that ridiculous song. Tut, tut, how does it go? It’s not worth remem-

bering; but I can’t bear to think that my memory is not so good as it was. Nothing is more important to a man in my position than a good memory. I mustn’t give it up; I must not be beaten. Ah—ah!—yes:

“Young Kitty’s an icicle bright in the sun,
But she melts and is nought to me;
And Dolly’s a glow-worm when day is done,
That the stars peep down to see:
There are maidens a-many, I wis,
But one—but one—to kiss;
There are maidens a-many, but none—but none——”
(*The voice of Auriol is heard in the wood: he sings loudly*)
“I’ll kiss but thee.”

Bishop. Eh? eh? No, no; that’s not it.

Auriol. Powers of the air! What have we here? Are you a fish or an islander?

(*The Bishop reaches one hand towards his shoes, and with the other grasps his apron.*)

A. Prithce lie still, Bully Her-

cules! I should never forgive myself if I disturbed such repose. Are you a brother of our order—of our disorder? Are you too a player? Are you a heavy father?

B. No, sir. (*He sinks back with a smile and a sigh.*) A character!

A. The pity of it! What is the value of such dignity and comely

obesity save for a heavy father? The boards shall groan beneath your tread. Come with me to Winbeach, and be presented to the best of managers as my Alter Ego—which for your ears unlearned I will render as “My other self,”—as my most substantial shadow.

B. My path lies in the other direction. I am on my way to Winford.

A. Speak not of Winford. I have been starring there.

B. Starring?

A. Yes, sir. I arose a new star over the steaming flats of Winford; but the eyes of the yokels had grown so used to staring on earth, that they could not look towards heaven. I was compelled to abandon the last two acts of “Hamlet,” and, in lieu of harrowing my royal mother’s soul, I betook myself to some ground-tumbling. Then was I under the eyes of the earth-born; they were aware of me; they thundered with their hobnails on the boards.

B. A precarious life, I fear, my friend.

A. Up to-day and down to-morrow; luckily it is always to-day. Isn’t this good enough? This wood; this air full of healthful fragrance; this fresh springing fern where the sunshine is ’prisoned; this mossy couch, whereon even

you might yield me a corner for sitting. Thank you; that’s good. Now, here are we two rascals as happy as virtuous souls! All this scene is ours, and all for nothing; we sit at our ease like gentlemen; we have, as it were, come in with an order; we are on Nature’s free list. But come, you were singing as I drew near; I too will lie along; and now, like Tityrus and Melibœus, will we contend in song. Do you begin; and if the victory be yours, I will give you a shilling.

B. No, no, I—— I did not know that I was singing. I was but testing my memory. It is very important for me that my memory should not fail me. I have a great deal to remember, a great deal of grave responsibility.

A. Powers of the air! This man speaks like an orator.

B. An indifferent orator.

A. Are you a politician?

B. My position compels me to take some share in legislature.

A. (*groans and says—*) Repent, and take some honest calling. My heart warms strangely to you: come with me and be a heavy father.

B. Truly, sir, I did not look to be admonished by a gentleman of your profession.

A. Come to me for good counsel. (*He sings.*)

“In the morning, by the bright light,
When Gabriel sounds his trumpet in the morning.”

B. Gabriel!

A. Pardon me: I have a weakness for piety. Even you, though sadly given to flesh, may have some taste for religion. Have you?

B. A what? Have I what? I trust—I devoutly—I humbly trust that I am not without religion.

A. Enough of this mocking tone! “How ill grey hairs——” You know the rest. (*He sings.*)

“Carve that possum, chillen,
Carve that possum, chillen,
Carve him to the heart!”

You too need carving to the heart, have a heart; but it beats faintly old possum. It may be that you beneath that load of flesh. Dig

down to it; lay it open to sweet nature.

B. My friend, I am not in the habit of *hearing* sermons.

A. I would you were. Layer on layer of worldliness, repelling jelly-like; and yet deep down my love for you describes a scarce perceptible human pulse, a faint heart-beat. I am strangely moved by some consciousness of a divine spark smouldering under this mountain; I would have you fan the flame. My unknown uncle may be some such feather-bed as you, and yet not wholly feathers.

B. Your uncle!

A. "A little more than kin, and less than kind." My mother's brother, but no more like my mother than I to Hercules. My mother "was a lady; last night she died;" or, to speak more accurately, she died in giving me birth; my father the fiddler sold me for drink; my sister the ballet-girl taught me to dance; "my name is Norval."

B. A fiddler! God bless my soul!

A. Amen to that! For the rest, I was baptised in a pint-pot, and they called me Auriol, after the carpenter's cat, who was my sponsor. Auriol, Auriolus, Auriolanus, Coriolanus, or what you will. Such as I am, I am beloved by all men, save only managers; I have a good leg but a torn stocking; a defective shirt but a cheerful heart beneath it; nay, here under this waistcoat—under this place where once a waistcoat was—there is a spark, a divine glimmer, a prisoned fire-fly, which I would not exchange for a dinner a-day, for the savoury meats which you love.

B. Poor lad!

A. Nay, not so poor neither. Listen! Do you hear that chink? It takes two coins to chink. Moreover, I have a royal mantle; item,

a blunted sword; item, a plume twice dyed for my hat; item, a pair of long stockings of good silk, plum-coloured, but little darned; item, an unfailing stock of health,—and of spirits, for which I must ask your pardon. You are probably richer than I; indeed, I observe that your shoes are but little worn, and that your cob is well-rounded in the barrel; yet who knows if you are happier than I. If I am sometimes too hungry, you are always overfed.

B. You should avoid personalities. You spoke of your father as a violinist?

A. Fiddler; a bad fiddler, and a worse man; a poor thing, but mine own—my father: in our society it is much to have had a father.

B. What was your father's name?

A. "Old Scratch" was he called; methinks the name became him well.

B. Can you tell me no more of him?

A. Perhaps you knew him.

B. No.

A. He was worth knowing. He was a merry man when sober; but he would cry in his cups: he drank at the fountain of a sentimental melancholy. And he was a regular man, too; you could tell the day of the week by my father's eye. Of a Saturday night it was dissolved in tears, for he was borne to bed weeping; on Sunday it was red and dry as Sahara, and he would often go to church with much groaning of the spirit; but after church the desert eye would slowly disappear like a lurid sun in mist, while my parent sought to forget the wickedness of the world; on the Monday it was but half open; on the Tuesday it was kindly sentimental; but by the Wednesday it was a merry eye, and my father went cheerfully to work. Yet cheerful himself, he caused no

cheerfulness ; mothers rebuked him for their infants' pangs ; only curs sang to his fiddling ; and thus did he, who began life with a pointed toe and a curl on his forehead, teacher of the ancient art of dancing——

B. He was a dancing-master ?

A. Ay, sir ; he taught the graceful art to crisp and pig-tailed maidens in a country town ; and from that height he fell ! First, he was extra fiddle, dresser, rougist, and occasional crowd to a company of strollers ; and at last, as the curl grew thin, and the foot grew thick, he would even play at street corners, and would reap the reward of iniquity, being paid the more readily in proportion to the harshness of his playing.

B. And was he married when he taught dancing ?

A. He danced into matrimony. He was a young and comely bachelor, when he pointed the toe of example. Pupils came and went—those of finer ear went first. Among those who came was one, one in whose heart young love had lit his flame. She marked and loved the curl upon his brow. He marked and loved the pigtail at her neck. They fled together, and——excuse these tears ; she was my mother.

B. And her name ? What was her name ?

A. The sacred name of wife, and in due time the yet more sacred name of mother.

B. What was her maiden name ?

A. Her maiden name was Susan Tomlinson. Her father plied the trade of bookseller at dreamy Sandwich, by the eastern sea.

B. Good heavens !

A. Do not swear, old man.

(The Bishop remains silent, lost in thought, staring at Auriol : Auriol whittles.)

B. And your sister ? You spoke of a sister ? Is she older than you ?

A. We are twins—twin blossoms on one stalk.

B. And you said, I think, that she danced ?

A. Yes, sir. Our mother died and left us. Our father melted from us. But ere he melted, he taught my sturdy sister some steps of the dance. Now she dances much and well. She is famous, while I—but no matter ! a time will come.

B. And your sister ? A dancer's profession is, I understand, beset by peculiar perils. Has she—is she——

A. She is. She goes straight. She is a square girl. She is as good a woman as stands on one toe in England.

B. And her tastes ? How would she be, for instance—excuse my asking such questions, but you interest me, you and your story—how would your sister fill a more secure, a more domestic position ?

A. She can make an Irish stew with any cook in England.

B. But—again pardon me—has she education, refinement.

A. If I be poor, I am honest : Josephine lacks culture. She has not her brother's polite education ; the grosser baby, she is still the grosser ; she writes with much action of the tongue ; she knows not a line of Shakespeare ; but to her honour be it said that she can remain on the blunted end of her right foot for a longer time than any woman of her weight in England.

(The Bishop groans.)

A. Now, though our songs be yet unsung, I must away for Winbeach, where I trust to find the salt fisherman more open than the loamy yokel to the touch of genius. Farewell, good father.

B. Stay a moment. Shall you be long at Winbeach ?

A. So long as the marine audience afford me other victual than stale fish.

B. And your address is The Theatre.

A. Yes.

B. An actor has sometimes a collection—I should say a benefit.

A. Sometimes—and sometimes he makes money by it.

B. Could you not take the theatre for a night? If so, I—you have interested me so much—I am perplexed how to serve you—I would, privately—privately, of course—take all the sittings.

A. Let me look on thee. Come to my heart, old man; and address your cheque to the Theatre Royal.

B. And perhaps I could—with-out indelicacy—send some present, some useful present, to your sister.

A. You can, and shall. You have nothing more to say to me? No? Then, farewell again.

(Auriol goes away.)

B. Good-bye.

(The Bishop left alone, ambles up and down in sore perplexity.)

B. My nearest kin, my nearest kin! What's to be done? A stroller and a dancer! The scandal, the scandal! I cannot see my duty plain. Hi, there! Stop! You, sir! Mr Auriol, hi!

(Auriol comes back.)

A. Well?

B. I am in great perplexity.

A. Come to me for counsel.

B. To you, an actor? Pardon me, but it is a point of conscience.

A. I, too, have a conscience. I make a point of keeping one about me.

B. Well, I will put it to you. It can do no harm. Your story has perplexed me strangely. It has called to my mind the case of a friend of mine.

A. Ha, ha. That friend! That old stage friend! We all know him. I lend my ear. Proceed.

B. My friend has a somewhat exalted position in the world; in fact he is a dignitary of the—the

Bench;—or rather (to be more strictly accurate) of the Church.

A. Nothing is proved against him so far.

B. My friend had but one relation in the world—a sister, whom he loved very dearly. When a mere boy, he was ordained, and went away to a distant part of the country. He was absorbed by his new work, and eager—yes, as I most truly believe—eager to do good; he was perhaps forgetful—yes, too forgetful of his home. Thus it happened that his sister—his dear sister—left alone—formed an unfortunate attachment. She went away with a man who taught—a man her inferior in every way. My friend strove hard to find her; but he failed. She kept her secret all these years; I only found out lately that her silence was the silence of the grave. Poor Susan!

A. Poor friend of yours!

B. Yes; it was terrible for my friend. She was dead; but she had left children—two children. My friend heard that these children had grown up in great freedom; had, in fact, led a roving life; quite harmless and—even worthy, but a life which had unfitted them, or presumably unfitted them, to share the sober and decorous life of my friend. They were both, in some way or other, connected with the stage. That is why I am moved to ask your advice. Advise me. And I will advise my friend.

A. What is your difficulty—that is, the difficulty of your friend?

B. Is he bound to make himself known to these people? to take them to his home?

A. His near kin?

B. His nearest kin.

A. Should these strollers sit at a bishop's table?

B. Is it not impossible? Ought he to ask them?

A. Would they come?

B. Of course. What a change for them! From poverty to comfort,—from a precarious to a settled and dignified life.

A. From porter to claret,—doubtful porter to certain claret! Are you honest with me, lord bishop?

B. What would you have me say?

A. I would have a bishop speak the truth.

B. I am your uncle — your mother's brother. Now?

A. I knew it.

B. You knew it?

A. We know that friend, we of the buskin: bishops and all, you borrow that old trick from the boards. I think I half knew you, when I saw you first.

B. What shall I do?

A. Nothing.

B. Nothing!

A. I shall think better of bishops for your sake. But I will not live with you, eat with you, or drink with you. Like our coats, we are cut differently. I should make your friends jump; you would stifle mine. Go home, good mine uncle, and say that you have met a fool i' the forest; and, prithee, think better of fools, as I will think better of bishops. And so give me your hand, good uncle, and good-bye; and by the powers of the air I will never call you nunky again!

B. But your sister?

A. My sister shall know nothing. She would be dull as a modern tragedy, were she tied to a bishop's apron-strings; yet for the weakness of woman, and for her itching for pantries and kitchens and good order, I dare not tell her. A linen-closet might tempt her to her own damnation.

B. Hush!

A. She shall know nothing, and be happy with her dancing and smiling.

B. But can I do nothing for her?

A. Ay, that you can. You shall settle something on her (be it mine to devise the means)—ay, and on your loving nephew too, pardye!

B. That I can do, and will. My lawyer shall arrange the matter with yours.

A. With mine! I keep a lawyer! I'd as lief keep a polecat.

B. Well, well: a not unnatural prejudice! However, I will speak to my lawyer, in whom I have perfect confidence; he will arrange everything without unnecessary publicity: he shall write to you to the theatre at Winbeach, and, if necessary, arrange a meeting.

A. If necessary, I will risk it. And now I am already a man with an income, with so much a-year! Pray heaven it do no violence to my art,—that my wit grow not lean as my waist waxes. Yet I'll risk it. And now for the last time, mine uncle—your blessing, uncle.

B. I give it you with a full heart.

A. Ay, and with a full purse, like a nabob uncle in a play: if I did not laugh, I should weep—and so no more, but thank you.

B. And I thank you.

A. What for?

B. For a lesson.

A. Good-bye. Let me hold your stirrup: so. And now, your road lies eastward; mine to the setting sun. See how the grass road lies golden under my feet. Chink, chink, two shillings to ring together! Clink, clink, and away in the golden weather! Good-bye.

B. Good-bye, my dear boy, good-bye.

ON SOME OF SHAKESPEARE'S FEMALE CHARACTERS :

BY ONE WHO HAS PERSONATED THEM.

[DEAR MR EDITOR,—These two or three letters were written in the autumn at the instigation, and for the gratification, of a dear and gifted friend who has since passed away. No thought of their being made public was in my mind, so they naturally ran into many personal details which I knew would make them more interesting to an intimate friend, but which otherwise I should not have thought worth recording. These details, I am told, I could not remove without altering the nature of my slight attempts to illustrate by the pen characters which, with much greater pleasure to myself, I have had to illustrate upon the stage. The few friends who have seen them appear to be all of one mind, that my “thoughts” may have an interest for a wider circle ;—and indeed I have been entreated, past all refusing, to give them to the world. But I confess to yielding up my own wish for privacy with great reluctance, all the more because the fear haunts me that I may appear to be dictating—to say, as it were, “This is Shakespeare’s Ophelia ;” whereas I only mean this is Ophelia as she has appeared to my mind—as she has lived, and lives for me. I hope this may be understood.—Believe me, &c.,

H. F. M.

31 ONSLOW SQUARE, LONDON, S.W.]

I.—OPHELIA.

BRYNTYSILIO, *August 10, 1880.*

“O rose of May! Sweet Ophelia!”

AND so you ask me, my friend,—indeed I may almost say that you insist,—after our late talk over her, that I should put down in writing my idea of Ophelia, that you may make, as you say, a new study of her character.

Accustomed as you are to write fluently all your thoughts, you will hardly believe what a difficult task you have set me. My views of Shakespeare’s women have been wont to take their shape in the living portraiture of the stage, and not in words. I have, in imagination, lived their lives from the very beginning to the end ; and Ophelia, as I have pictured her, is so unlike what I hear and read about her, and have seen, that I can scarcely hope to make any one think of her

as I do. It hurts me to hear her spoken of, as she often is, as a weak creature, wanting in truthfulness, in purpose, in force of character, and only interesting when she loses the little wits she had. And yet who can wonder that a character so delicately outlined, and shaded in with strokes so fine, should be often gravely misunderstood ?

Faint and delicate, however, as these shadowings are, they are yet so true to nature, and, at the same time, so full of suggestion, that I look on Ophelia as one of the strongest proofs our great master has left us of his belief in the actor’s art (his own), and of his trust in the power of filling up, at least by sympathetic natures, and of giving full and vivid life to, the

creatures of his brain. Without this belief, could he have written as he did, when boys and beardless youths were the only representatives of his women on the stage? Yes, he must have looked beyond "the ignorant present," and known that a time would come when women, true and worthy, should find it a glory to throw the best part of their natures into these ideal types which he has left to testify to his faith in womanhood, and to make them living realities for thousands to whom they would else have been unknown. Think of a boy as Juliet! as "heavenly Rosalind!" as "divine Imogen!" or the gracious lady of Belmont, "richly left," but still more richly endowed by nature—"The poor rude world," says Jessica, "hath not her fellow."—Think of a boy as Miranda, Cordelia, Hermione, Desdemona, who "was heavenly true,"—as the bright Beatrice, and so on, through all the wondrous gallery! How could any youth, however gifted and specially trained, even faintly suggest these fair and noble women to an audience? Woman's words coming from a man's lips, a man's heart,—it seems monstrous to think of! One quite pities Shakespeare, who had to put up with seeing his brightest creations thus marred, misrepresented, spoiled.

But to come back to Ophelia. She was one of the pet dreams of my girlhood,—partly, perhaps, from the mystery of her madness. In my childhood I was much alone,—taken early away from school because of delicate health; often sent to spend months at the sea, in the charge of kind but busy people, who, finding me happy with my books on the beach, left me there long hours by myself. I had begged from home the Shakespeare I had been used to read there,—an acting

edition by John Kemble. This and the *Arabian Nights*—how dear these books were to me! Then I had the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Satan was my great hero. I think I knew him by heart. His address to the council I have often de-claimed to the waves, when sure of being unobserved. I had also a translation—I do not know whose (poor enough, but good enough for me then)—of Dante's *Inferno*, some lines of which sank deep into my heart. I have not seen the book for years and years; but they are still there.

"Up; be bold!

Vanquish fatigue by energy of mind!
For not on plumes or canopied in state
The soul wins fame!"

How often since, in life's hard struggles and troubles, have these lines helped me!

My books were indeed a strange medley, but they were all that were within my reach, and I found them satisfying. They filled my young heart and mind with what fascinated me most, the gorgeous, the wonderful, the grand, the heroic, the self-denying, the self-devoting.

Like all children, I kept, as a rule, my greatest delight to myself. I remember on some occasions, after I had returned home to my usual studies, when a doubt arose about some passage which had happened to be in my little storehouse, being able to repeat whole chapters and scenes of my favourites to the amused ears of those about me. But I never revealed how much my life was wrapt up in them, even to my only sister, dear as she was to me. She was many years older than myself, and too fond of fun, to share in my day-and-night dreams. I knew I should only be laughed at or quizzed.

Thus I had lived again and again

through the whole childhood and lives of many of Shakespeare's heroines, long before it was my happy privilege to impersonate and make them, in my fashion, my own. During the few years I acted under Mr Macready's management, almost the first, as you know, in my theatrical life, I was never called upon to act the character of Ophelia,—I suppose because the little snatches of song (merely what we call the humming of a tune) kept still alive the tradition that an accomplished singer was required for the part. I had my wish, however, when in Paris, a little later, I was asked, as a favour, to support Mr Macready in *Hamlet* by acting Ophelia. I need not say how nervous I felt,—all the more because of this *singing* tradition. The performances were given in the Salle Ventadour, on the "off-nights" of the Italian Opera.

Oh how difficult it is, however much you have lived in a thing, to make real your own ideal, and give it an utterance and a form! To add to my fright, I was told just before entering on the scene, that Grisi, and many others of the Italian group, were sitting in a private box on the stage. But I believe I sang in tune, and soon forgot her and all. I could not help feeling that I somehow drew my audience with me. And what an audience it was! No obtrusive noisy applause, for there was no organised *claque* for the English plays; but what an indescribable atmosphere of sympathy surrounded you! Every tone was heard, every look was watched, felt, appreciated. I seemed lifted into "an ampler ether, a diviner air." Think, if this were so in Desdemona, in Ophelia, what it must have been to act Juliet to them! I was in a perfect ecstasy of delight. I remember that, because of the curtailment of some of the scenes in

Romeo and Juliet (the brilliant Mercutio was cut out), I had to change my dress very quickly and came to the side-scene breathless. I said something to Mr Serle, the acting manager, about the hot haste of it all,—no pause to gather oneself up for the great exertion that was to follow. He replied, "Never mind, you will feel no fatigue after this." And he was right. The inspiration of the scene is at all times the best anodyne to pain and bodily fatigue. But who could think of either before an audience so sensitively alive to every touch of the artist's hand?

But to return to poor Ophelia. I learned afterwards that, among the audience, when I played her first, were many of the finest minds in Paris; and these found "most pretty things" to say of the Ophelia to which I had introduced them. Many came after the play to my dressing-room in the French fashion,—to say them, I suppose; but having had the same scene to go through before, after Desdemona, the character in which I first appeared in Paris, my English shyness took me out of the theatre as soon as I had finished, and before the play ended. All this was of course pleasant. But really what gratified me most, was to learn that Mr Macready, sternest of critics, watched me on each night in the scenes of the fourth act; and among the many kind things he said, I cannot forget his telling me that I had thrown a new light for him on the part, and that he had never known the mad scenes even touched before. How I treated them specially, it would be difficult to describe to you in words, because they were the outcome of the whole character and life of Ophelia, as these had shaped themselves in my youthful dream.

And now to tell you, as nearly as I can, what that dream was.

I pictured Ophelia to myself as the motherless child of an elderly Polonius. His young wife had first given him a son, Laertes, and had died a few years later, after giving birth to the poor little Ophelia. The son takes much after his father, and, his student-life over, seeks his pleasure in the gayer life and country of France; fond of his little sister in a patronising way, in their rare meetings, but neither understanding nor caring to understand her nature at all.

The baby Ophelia was left, as I fancy, to the kindly, but thoroughly unsympathetic tending of country folk, who knew little of "inland nurture." Think of her, sweet, fond, sensitive, tender-hearted, the offspring of a delicate dead mother, cared for only by roughly mannered and uncultured natures! One can see the lonely child, lonely from choice, with no playmates of her kind, wandering by the streams, plucking flowers, making wreaths and coronals, learning the names of all the wild flowers in glade and dingle, having many pet ones, listening with eager ears, and lulled to sleep at night by the country songs, whose words and melodies (the former, in true country fashion, not too refined or modest) come back to her memory again vividly, as such things strangely but surely do, only when her wits have flown. Thus it is that, when she has been "blasted with ecstasy," all the country customs return to her mind: the manner of burying the dead, the strewing the grave with flowers, "at his head, a grass-green turf; at his heels, a stone,"—with all the other country ceremonies. I think it important to keep in view this part of her supposed life, because it puts to flight all the coarse suggestions which unimaginative critics have sometimes made, to explain

how Ophelia came to have in her mind snatches of such ballads as are scarcely to be expected from a young and cultured gentlewoman's lips.

When we see Ophelia first, this "Rose of May" is just budding; and, indeed, it is as a bud, never as a full flower, that she lived her brief life.

"Et, rose,—elle a vécu, ce que vivent les
roses,
L'espace d'un matin."

She was still very young, in her early 'teens, according to what Laertes says, when he last sees her. We can imagine her formal, courtierly father, on one of his rare and stated visits to his country home (ill spared from his loved Court duties), noting with surprise his little daughter grown into the promise of a charming womanhood. The tender beauty of this budding rose must be no longer left to blush unseen; this shy, gentle nature must be developed, made into something more worthy of her rank. She must imbibe the Court culture, and live in its atmosphere. She must become a Court lady; and this hitherto half-forgotten flower must be made to expand, under his own eye and teaching, into the beauty of a full-blown hothouse exotic.

When we first see her, we may fairly suppose that she has been only a few months at Court. It has taken off none of the bloom of her beautiful nature. That is pure and fresh and simple as she brought it from her country home. One change has taken place, and this a great one. Her heart has been touched, and has found its ideal in the one man about the Court most likely to reach it, both from his rare and attractive personal qualities, and a certain loneliness in his position not very unlike her own.

How could she but feel flattered—drawn towards this romantic, desolate Hamlet, the observed of all observers, whose “music vows” have been early whispered in her ears? On the other hand, what sweet repose it must have been to the tired, moody scholar, soldier, prince, dissatisfied with the world and all its ways, to open his heart to her, and to hear the shy yet eloquent talk, which he would woo from her,—to watch the look and manner and movements of this graceful child of nature—watch, too, her growing wonder at all her new surroundings, the Court ceremonies, the strange diversities of character, and the impressions made upon her by them,—what delight to trace and analyse the workings of this pure impressionable mind, all the more interesting and wonderful to him because of the contrast she presented to the parent stem! In all this there was for him the subtle charm, which the deep philosophical intellect must ever find in the pure unconscious innocence and wisdom of a guileless heart.

One can see how the pompous officiousness and the platitudes of Polonius irritate Hamlet beyond expression. What a contrast the daughter presents to him! Restful, intelligent, unobtrusive, altogether charming, and whom he loves “Best, O most best, believe it.” “Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, Hamlet.” And to Ophelia, how great must have been the attraction of an intercourse with a mind like Hamlet’s, when she first saw him, and had been sought by his “solicitations”? How alluring, how subtly sweet to one hitherto so lonely, so tender-hearted, shy, and diffident of her power to please; yet, though she knew it not, so well fitted to understand and to

appreciate all the finest qualities of the young lord Hamlet! We see how often and often they had met, by Polonius’s own telling. Nor could he possibly have been ignorant that they did so meet. He says:—

“But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
(As I perceived it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me.)”

Then, all that her brother says to her shows complete indifference to her feelings. I never could get over the shock of his lecturing her, “touching the lord Hamlet,” when we first see them together as he is starting for France. Poor maiden! to have this treasured secret of her inner life, her very life, her very soul, a secret so sweet, so sacred, so covered over as she thinks from all eyes,—thus dragged rudely to the light; discussed in the most commonplace tone, and her very maidenly modesty questioned! Who will say she is not truthful, when on being asked, as she is soon after, by her father, “What is’t, Ophelia, he hath said to you?” she replies at once, notwithstanding all her pain, “So please you, something touching the lord Hamlet”? Think how her sensitive, delicate nature must again have shrunk and quivered, while listening to the cautious and worldly platitudes of her father, which follow! Then, to be commanded to deny herself to the one being dear to her, and with whom she has sympathy; and what a feeling of degradation as well as anguish must have been behind the few words she utters! “I shall obey, my lord.”

Ophelia naturally had her attendants whose duty it was to tell her father of these meetings, and who evidently did so. They were clearly not objected to by him, and he let the interviews go on, till he thought

it might be as well, by interfering, to find out if Hamlet were in earnest in his attachment, and if it would be sanctioned by the king and queen. By this interference his worldly wisdom overreached itself. It came at the wrong, the worst time. He bids Ophelia deny Hamlet access to her, trusting that this will make him openly avow his love; and, of course, in entire ignorance of the fearful scene, the dread revelation, which had meanwhile taken place, and which was to cut Hamlet's life in twain, to obliterate from it all "trivial fond records," and to shake to its foundations all faith in womanhood, hitherto most sacred to him in the name and person of his mother, the mother whom from his boyhood he had fondly loved, and whom he had seen so cherished and adored by his dead father.

Pause a moment with me, and think of the extraordinary attractions of this mother. Another Helen of Troy she seems to me, in the subtle fascination which she exercises on all who come within her influence; not perhaps designedly, but like the Helena of the second part of Goethe's *Faust*, by an untoward fate which drew on all insensibly to love her.

"Wehe mir! Welch streng Geschick

Verfolgt mich, überall der Männer Busen
So zu bethören, dass sie weder sich
Noch sonst ein Würdiges verschonten."

"Woe's me, what ruthless fate
Pursues me, that, where'er I go, I thus
Befool men's senses, so they not respect
Themselves, nor aught that's worthy!"

What a picture is presented of the depth of her husband's love, in Hamlet's words that he would not "betwixt the winds of heaven visit her cheek too roughly"! And this spell still exercises itself upon his spirit after his death. Observe how ten-

derly he calls Hamlet's attention to the queen in the closet scene—

"But see, amazement on your mother
sits!"
Oh, step between her and her fighting
soul!"

Claudius, his successor, perils his soul for her. She is his all in all. See what he says of her—

"She's so conjunctive to my life and
soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his
sphere,
I could not but by her."

She is tenderness itself to her son. "The queen his mother," says Claudius, "lives almost by his looks."

I cannot believe that Gertrude knew anything of the murder of her husband. His spirit does not even hint that she was privy to it; if she had been, could he have spoken of her so tenderly as he does? Hamlet, in the height of his passion, does indeed charge her with this guilty knowledge in the words—

"Almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his
brother."

Again he calls Claudius in her hearing "a murderer and a villain," but in both cases the imputation clearly wakens no echo in her soul; and she puts it down, with much else that he says, to "the heat and flame of his distemper." "The black and grained spots" in her soul, of which she speaks, are the stings of her awakened conscience, to which her husband's spirit had warned Hamlet to leave her—remorse for her too soon forgetfulness of her noble husband, and her almost immediate marriage with his brother, the shame of which Hamlet's passionate words have brought home to her so unexpectedly and so irresistibly.

Gertrude evidently sees with satisfaction the growing love between Hamlet and Ophelia. She loves the "sweet maid," and hopes to see their betrothal, and to strew her bridal bed. On her side, Ophelia had felt fully the gracious kindness of the queen; had gratefully returned the affection shown to her; and, like the rest, had been drawn towards her by her beauty and winning graciousness. A proof of this breaks out in her madness, when she clamours for, and will not be denied, the presence of "the beauteous majesty of Denmark."

Ophelia's conduct in reference to the meeting with Hamlet, concerted by her father and the king, has drawn upon her head a world of surely unjust censure and indignation. When the poor girl is brought, half willingly, half unwillingly, to that (for her) fatal interview, we must not forget the previous one, described by her to her father, when she rushes in affrighted, and recounts Hamlet's sudden and forbidden intrusion upon her in her closet, where she was sewing; presenting an appearance such as no sane gentleman could make before a lady—slovenly, "his stockings foul'd, ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ankle," the woe-worn look, the sigh so piteous and profound, the eyes, as he went backwards out of the chamber, bending to the last their light upon herself. Her father's interpretation is, that "he is mad for her love;" the special cause for this outbreak, that "she did repel his letters, and denied his access." Here his wordly wisdom is again at fault.

"I am sorry, that with better heed and judgment,
I had not quoted him; I feared he did but trifle,
And meant to wreck thee."

All this is startling and sad enough, but not entirely hopeless or remediless. Ophelia has at least the solace of hoping, believing, that she is beloved by her "soul's idol." Could she, then, but see him once again, she might learn whether Hamlet's strange agitation were really what was represented,—whether, as her father had said, he were indeed "mad for her love"! In this state of mind, surely she is not to be much blamed, or judged very harshly, if she consented to lend herself to the arrangement proposed by her father; acutely painful though it must have been to her fine nature, after denying him access to her repeatedly, thus to thrust herself upon her lover's notice, and become, as it were, the partner in a trick. She has, too, the sanction of his mother the queen, who says:—

"And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope
your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours."

Her fault, if fault it were, was cruelly expiated. She will test his affection by offering to return his love-tokens, his gifts and letters—anything to end this torturing suspense. We can believe how cautiously, how tenderly her approaches are made to this so deeply loved, and, as she fears, afflicted one. That Ophelia should, after denying her presence to him, thus place herself in Hamlet's path, and challenge his notice, at once excites in his mind a suspicion of some device to circumvent him. Saluting her at first gently, his tone alters, as he sees in the offer of the return of his "remembrances" a repetition of the plot laid for him before in the persons of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. That he is again to be thus played with, and that this

innocent girl, as he had thought her, should lend herself to entrap him, drives him past his patience; and without mercy he soon begins to pour down upon her the full vials of his wrath. In their last interview he had been touchingly gentle and sad: voiceless,—showing a pathos beyond words: like the reluctant parting of the soul from the body. Now, his rude meaningless words, his violent manner, his shrill voice, “out of tune and harsh,” the absence of all courtesy, convince her that he is mad indeed. How can it be otherwise? In all their former intercourse he had appeared to her as

“The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers!”

His gifts were offered to her with “words of so sweet breath composed, as made the things more rich.”

He could not be more pitiless if the worst of her sex stood there, and not this young creature, this tender willow, swaying, bending before the storm-bursts of his wrath, the cutting winds of his fierce words. Many of these words, these reproaches, must have passed harmless over the innocent heart which did not know their meaning. But what a picture (who could paint it?) is that of the stunned, bewildered, heart-stricken lamb, thus standing alone to bear the sins of all her sex thrown at her! She can only whisper a prayer or two for him,—no thought of her own desolation comes to her then. “O, help him, you sweet heavens!” “Heavenly powers, restore him!” When suddenly challenged, “Where’s your father?” the question recalls to her remembrance what she has for the time

forgotten in deeper matter, that he is at this very moment acting the degrading part of eavesdropper. What can she do but stammer out in reply, “At home, my lord”? Shall she expose the old man, when thus called to answer for him, to the insults, the violence of Hamlet’s mad anger, which must have fallen upon him had she told the truth? No; like Desdemona she faces the falsehood, and to screen her father, takes it upon her own soul, “O, who has done this deed?” “Nobody; I myself. Farewell; Commend me to my kind lord.” Who thinks of condemning Desdemona? As Emilia says, “Oh, she was heavenly true.” And yet I have seen Ophelia’s answer brought forward as a proof of her weakness; and this weakness of character asserted to be the cause of Hamlet’s failure, or, at least, to play an important part in the tragedy of his character. Such weakness I call *strength*, in the highest, most noble, because most self-forgetting, sense of the word.

And so Ophelia, in her “weakness,” fears to tell the truth, lest, in this too terrible paroxysm of madness which now possesses him, Hamlet might possibly kill her old father. But this is soon to follow, and proves to be the drop too much in her cup of lonely anguish. When Hamlet has left the scene, even then not a sob is heard, no tears are shed: there is no time yet for self-pity. Her soul’s agony is too deep for tears,—beyond all utterance of the common kind. First in her thoughts is the “noble mind o’erthrown,” and “most sovereign reason, like sweet bells jangled.” At last, when she has gone through the catalogue of his rare virtues, his princely qualities, his noble attributes,—“all quite, quite down”!—at the end she looks

at herself,—she who had “suck’d the honey of his music vows.” What is left for her?—for her “of ladies most deject and wretched”? “O, woe is me! To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!” This is all she says, “still harping on” Hamlet.

In the usual stage arrangement Ophelia leaves the scene with these words. But how much more touching is Shakespeare’s idea that she shall remain! Her heartless father, knowing nothing, seeing nothing of the tragedy that is going on before his eyes, unconscious from first to last how deeply she has been wounded, and still treating her merely as a tool, says,

“How now, Ophelia!

You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all.”

He and the king had only eyes and ears for Hamlet; and so she drifts away from them into a shoreless “sea of troubles,” unheeded and unmissed.

We see her once again, playing a sort of automaton part in the play-scene—sitting patiently, watchfully, with eyes only for the poor stricken one who asks to lay his head on her lap. You see, in the little that passes between them, how gently she treats her wayward, smitten lover. And then, having no clue to his trouble, no thread by which to link it with the past, she is scared away, with the rest, at what appears to be a fresh outbreak of Hamlet’s malady. By this time her own misery and desolation must have come fully home to her,—her hurt mind, her wrecked happiness must be more than the young unaccustomed spirit can stand up against. She is not likely, after the previous experience, to seek solace in her father’s sympathy: nor is hers a nature to seek it any-

where. If found, it must have come to her by the way. The queen is, by this time, wrapped up in her own griefs,—inclined to confess herself to Heaven, repent what’s past. “O Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.” “What shall I do?” She is grieved enough for Ophelia when she sees her “distract,” but has had no time to waste upon her amid her own numerous fast-growing cares,—not even, as it seems, to break to her the news of her father’s death. There might have been some drop of comfort, if she had told Ophelia, as she told the king, “He weeps for what is done!” Most likely, in the usual marvelous way of common people, the news of Polonius’s death by Hamlet’s hand was conveyed hurriedly, without any preparation, to Ophelia’s ears, by her attendants. Shock upon shock! The heart already stricken, the young brain undisciplined in life’s storms, and in close and subtle sympathy with him who was her very life,—she catches insensibly the infection of his mind’s disease, her wits go wandering after his, and, like him, she falls down,—“quite, quite down.” One feels the mercifulness of this. The “sweet Heavens,” to which she had appealed to help Hamlet, had helped her! Her mind, in losing memory, loses the remembrance of all the woful past, and goes back to her childhood, with its simple folk-lore and nursery-rhymes. Still, through all this, we have the indication of dimly remembered wrongs and griefs. She says she hears “There’s tricks i’ the world, and hems, and beats her heart; . . . speaks things in doubt, that carry but half sense, . . . would make one think there might be thought, though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.” But the deeper suffering—the love and grief together—cannot (perhaps never could) find

expression in words. The soul's wreck, the broken heart, are seen only by Him who knows all. Happily, there is no vulgar comment made upon the deep affection which she had so silently cherished,—no rude pitying words. "O! this," says the king, "is the poison of deep grief; it springs all from her father's death." Laertes says:—

"O rose of May!

O Heavens! is't possible, a young maid's
wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?"

He comes a little nearer the truth in what follows:—

"Nature is fine in love: and, where 'tis
fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves."

But one sees he has not the faintest insight into the real cause of her loss of wits. The revenge he seeks upon Hamlet is for his father—

"... his means of death, his obscure
burial,—
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er
his bones,
No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,—
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to
earth,
That I must call't in question."

A matter of family pride in Laertes, as well as grief for his father's loss. Then at her grave, he says—

"O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursèd head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious
sense
Deprived thee of!"

Only "when they shall meet at compt" will even Hamlet know the grief he has brought upon, the wrong he has done to, this deep and guileless spirit. So far as we see, he has indeed blotted her from his mind as a "trivial fond record." He is so self-centred, so wrapped up in his own suffering, that he has no thought to waste on the delicate girl whom he had wooed with such

a "fire of love," and had taught to listen to his most honeyed vows. He casts her from him like a worthless weed, without a word of explanation or a quiver of remorse. Let us hope that when he sees her grave his conscience stings him; but beyond ranting louder than Laertes about what he would do for her sake—and she *dead*!—there is not much sign of his love being worthy, at any time, of the sweet life lost for it.

Perhaps you will think that, in the fulness of my sympathy for Ophelia, I feel too little for Hamlet. But this is not really so. One cannot judge Hamlet's actions by ordinary rules. He is involved in the meshes of a ruthless destiny, from which by nature and temperament he is powerless to extricate himself. In the infirmity of a character which expends its force in words and shrinks from resolute action, he drags down Ophelia unconsciously with him. They are the victims of the same inexorable fate. I could find much to say in explanation and in extenuation of the shortcomings of one on whom a task was laid which he of all men, by the essential elements of his character, seemed least fitted to accomplish.

But you see, I only touch upon his character, so far as it bears upon Ophelia, on what he is and has been to her. Before the story begins, he has offered her his love "in honourable fashion." Then we hear from her of the silent interview which so affrights her. After this, when for the first time we see them together, he treats her as only a madman could, and in a way which not even his affectation of madness can excuse. Again, in the Play scene which follows, the same wilfulness, even insolence, of manner is shown to her. Now, whatever his own troubles, perplexities, heart-

breaks, might be, it is hard to find an apology for such usage of one whose heart he could not but know he had won. He is even tenderer, more considerate, to his mother, whom he thinks so wanton and so guilty, than to this young girl, whom he has "importuned with love," and "given countenance to his speech with almost all the holy vows of heaven."

I cannot, therefore, think that Hamlet comes out well in his relations with Ophelia. I do not forget what he says at her grave:—

"I loved Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum!"

But I weigh his actions against his words, and find them wanting. The very language of his letter to Ophelia, which Polonius reads to the king and queen, has not the true ring in it. It comes from the head, and not from the heart—it is a string of euphuisms, which almost justifies Laertes' warning to his sister, that the "trifling of Hamlet's favour" is but "the perfume and supplicance of a minute." Hamlet loves, I have always felt, only in a dreamy, imaginative way, with a love as deep, perhaps, as can be felt by a nature fuller of thought and contemplation than of sympathy and passion. Ophelia does not sway his whole being, perhaps no woman could, as he sways hers. Had she done so, not even the task imposed upon him by his father's spirit could have made him blot her love from his mind as "a trivial fond record," for it would have been interwoven inseparably with his soul once and for ever.

When Ophelia comes before us for the last time, with her lap full of flowers, to pay all honour and reverence, as she thinks, in country fashion, to her father's grave, the brother is by her side, of whom she

had said before, most significantly, that he should "know of it." "I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground." Then he can lavish in her heedless ears the kind phrases, the words of love, of which in her past days he had been too sparing. "O rose of May! dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!" But the smiles are gone which would once have greeted these kind words. He has passed out of her memory, even as she had passed out of his, when he was "treading the primrose path of dalliance" in sunny France. She has no thought but to bury the dead—*her dead love*—her old father taking the outward form of it. Even the flowers she has gathered have little beauty or sweetness,—*"rosemary for remembrance; pray you, love, remember:"*—he has said he never gave her aught! "I loved you not"—*"rue,"* for desolation; fennel, and columbines—a daisy, the only pleasant flower;—with pansies for thoughts. Violets she would give, but cannot. "They withered all" with her dead love.

To Ophelia's treatment of her brother in this scene, I ventured to give a character which I cannot well describe, but which, as I took care it should not be obtrusive, and only as a part of the business of the scene, I felt sure that my great master, the actor-author, would not have objected. I tried to give not only his words, but, by a sympathetic interpretation, his deeper meaning—a meaning to be apprehended only by that sympathy which arises in, and is the imagination of, the heart.

When Laertes approaches Ophelia, something in his voice and look brings back a dim flitting remembrance; she gives him of her flowers, and motions him to share in the obsequies she is paying. When

her eyes next fall upon him, she associates him somehow with the "tricks i' the world." A faint remembrance comes over her of his warning words, of the shock they gave her, and of the misery which came so soon afterwards. These she pieces together with her "half sense," and thinks he is the cause of all. She looks upon him with doubt, even aversion; and, when he would approach her, shrinks away with threatening gestures and angry looks. All this was shown only at intervals, and with pauses between,—mostly by looks and slight action,—a fitful vagueness being indicated throughout. The soul of sense being gone, the sweet mind had become "such stuff as dreams are made of." The body bore some resemblance to the rose of May; but it was only as the casket without the jewel. Nothing was left there of the thoughtful, reticent, gentle Ophelia. The unobtrusive calm which had formerly marked her demeanour had changed to waywardness. The forcing her way into the presence of the Queen, where she had been used to go only when called, clamouring for

her will, and with her winks, nods, and gestures, "strewing dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds," tells with a terrible emphasis how all is changed, and how her reason too has become "like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh."

Poor rose of May! Who does not give a sigh, a sob of grief, at miserable Gertrude's beautiful account of the watery death of this fragile bud, cut down by a cold spring storm, before her true midsummer had arrived? She sings her own requiem, and carries the flowers of her innocence along with her to the end. Like the fabled swan, with her death-song on her lips, she floats unconsciously among the water-lilies, till the kindly stream embraces and takes her to itself, and to "that blessed last of deaths, where death is dead."

Dear friend, these are little better than rough notes. I have written much, yet seem to have said nothing. "Piece out my imperfections with your thoughts."

Yours always affectionately,

HELENA FAUCIT MARTIN.

To Miss GERALDINE E. JEWSEBURY.

THE SEER.

A TALE.—BY RUDOLPH LINDAU.

I.

THE fast train from London to Paris, *viâ* Folkestone and Boulogne, stops for a few minutes at Verton—an unimportant station where passengers are rarely set down or taken up. In general, the engine merely renews its supply of water, and the train proceeds on its way.

We were seven in the same carriage one fiercely hot day in July, and we had been grumbling, ever since we left Boulogne, at the parsimony of the company which, in order to avoid adding a carriage, had thus crowded us, when suddenly, at Verton, just as the train was moving off, the door of our carriage was hastily opened, and an eighth—and most unwelcome—fellow traveller made his appearance.

I occupied a corner near the door by which he entered. On my right an Englishman was sleeping soundly; and in front of him was the only vacant seat. It was filled with rugs, umbrellas, and other articles which we had all thrown there. Next to this unoccupied place, and opposite to me, sat a young man of about twenty-five, as to whose nationality I had entertained some doubts, until he drew from his pocket a cigarette-case in solid silver, filled with Russian *papyros*. He selected one of these, squeezed it gently between his fingers, and lighted it by means of a long match attached to the case. He then inhaled the smoke with a deep breath, and afterwards exhaled it, with a peculiar look of enjoyment, through his fine and well-cut nostrils.

This young Russian, who wore a fashionable travelling suit, seemed out of health. His manners were

those of a gentleman. He was very tall and thin, and, from the olive hue of his complexion, he might have been mistaken for a Spaniard or a Brazilian. The long, slender fingers of his well-shaped hand seemed endowed with strange flexibility, and were constantly stroking the long moustache which covered his upper lip. His small, regular, well-set teeth were of dazzling whiteness. His dark-brown hair was short and very thick; it grew low down upon the forehead and upon the back of the neck, covering the narrow, elongated cranium, as with a dark fur cap. The youthful mouth, with its full ruddy lips, betrayed a nervous temperament, a kind, weak, and irresolute nature, and served to render attractive a countenance which otherwise might have appeared uninteresting, and even, to a certain degree, repellant. But the most striking feature in the face of my *vis-à-vis* were his eyes, which were round, black, set wide apart, and of exceeding brightness. They were restless to an almost wearying degree—wandering from one object to another, though from time to time they would be riveted on one or other of his fellow-travellers with curious pertinacity. I had, in my turn, been subjected to this strange examination, and had been disagreeably impressed by it. It was a suspicious, disquieting, inquisitorial look, and one felt strongly tempted to reply to it by a direct question: "Do you know me? Why do you look at me thus? What are you seeking to discover?"—This uncomfortable stare of the young

Russian seemed the more strange from its being in complete contradiction with his otherwise polite and even courteous manners. It was a searching look, taking no account of those on whom it rested—a bold look, which I am tempted to compare to that of a police detective who, being in quest of a malefactor, is inclined to suspect that every new-comer is the man he wants.

The other end of the carriage was occupied by four Frenchmen who seemed to know each other, and who discussed the topics of the day.

All—with the exception of the Englishman, who continued to sleep imperturbably—glanced reproachfully at the intruder; but he seemed to take little heed of our ill-humour. "If you please," he said sharply, pointing to the heap of things which encumbered the vacant seat; upon which, each of us, with more or less good grace, hastened to select the articles which belonged to him, and stowed them away, either in the net or under the seat. One railway-rug, however, remained—its owner, the Englishman, being fast asleep. The new-comer waited an instant; then he unceremoniously bundled it up and kicked it under the seat. I could not help wondering at the free-and-easy way in which he treated another man's property. The train started at once, and then I examined attentively our new fellow-traveller.

His appearance was coarse and repulsive—the appearance of a rough, low-lived man in his Sunday clothes. His linen was rumpled and soiled with perspiration; his clothes and boots were ill-made and covered with dust. His age may have been about thirty, and he showed every sign of great bodily strength. He was short and thick-set; bull-throated, with round,

massive shoulders, thick red hands, swollen with the heat, and flat hard nails; muscular wrists, and short, clumsy legs. A man with straw-coloured hair, cut short and brushed forward on the temples, bushy whiskers and no moustache; the sunburnt complexion of one who has led an out-door life; a low forehead, a thick nose, a wide mouth with thin tight lips, and a prominent jaw; bright, sharp, wicked eyes, which glanced stealthily and yet defiantly around. Such was the new-comer.

He was no sooner seated than he took a rapid survey of his fellow-travellers. It was apparently satisfactory, for he pulled out of his pocket a large coloured check handkerchief, and breathing loudly, he wiped the moisture from his brow. I then noticed that the first and second fingers of his right hand were bound up with fine cambric—apparently a woman's pocket-handkerchief. In the palm of the hand there was a large stain of clotted blood. Those two fingers had evidently received a wound. After a few minutes he loosened his long black neck-tie, and drew a deep breath, like one who has gone through some violent bodily exercise, and is about to seek repose. Throwing off his round black hat with a jerk, he stretched out his legs, placed his two hands on his thighs, and, with his head bent forward and his eyes staring straight before him, remained apparently plunged in deep thought.

The young Russian had not failed to bestow on the new arrival that scrutinising look with which, a short time before, he had examined me. This man seemed to interest him in a peculiar degree; for, whereas a single glance had sufficed for me, he now turned round towards his left-hand neighbour, and looked at him with strange fixedness, as

though he sought to engrave those vulgar and repulsive features on his memory.

The man who was the object of this persistent scrutiny was not aware of it for some time; he was too absorbed in his own reflections to notice what was going on around him. But suddenly, as the train slackened speed on nearing Abbeville, he raised his head to look out, and his eyes met those of the Russian. This latter seemed painfully embarrassed, while the new-comer, with an angry frown, and an inflamed countenance, turned upon him, and said roughly—

“Why are you looking at me? Do you know me? What do you want with me?”

I could not but consider these questions as quite justifiable; for I had been on the point, a short time before, of putting them to my opposite neighbour. The tone in which he replied, however, impressed me favourably.

“I beg your pardon,” he said, in a gentle and deprecating voice. “Believe me, I had no intention of annoying you.”

The man from Verton muttered something between his teeth. He then got up, and with a scarcely audible “By your leave,” leaned forward between the Russian and myself to look out towards the station we were rapidly approaching. After a moment he sat down again; but the train had scarcely stopped when he jumped out of the carriage, and, with his right hand thrust into the side-pocket of his coat, where he seemed to be holding something, he looked impatiently right and left. The platform was empty. Besides a few railway officials, there was only one gendarme, who walked slowly and unconcernedly along the train, looking into each carriage as he passed it. It chanced that he lingered a little in front of

ours, and I then distinctly saw our fellow-traveller’s hand take a tighter hold of the unseen article in his pocket. The gendarme passed on. When the train started again, the man got in; but he stood for some time between the Russian and myself, and only resumed his seat when we had left the station behind us, and were going at full speed.

The Russian had opened a book, and tried to assume the appearance of an unobservant reader; but his thoughts were not with his book—and now and again I saw him steal a glance at his neighbour. His countenance betrayed great perplexity, as though he were seeking the solution of some difficult problem. Once our eyes met. His look seemed to ask assistance from me, and to say, “Help me, if you can, to understand.” I was beginning to feel rather puzzled at what was going on around me; so, at Amiens, finding myself near the Russian at the buffet, I asked him whether he thought he recognised the traveller from Verton, as he watched him so perseveringly.

“No, I do not know him,” he answered politely, and in a tone which seemed to encourage further conversation; “but the man has something about him which attracts me.”

“Well, really,” I answered, smiling, “I was not prepared for that answer. For my part, I must confess that his face has no attractions for me. It strikes me as peculiarly repulsive. The man looks like an escaped convict.”

“An ugly face, truly,—a repulsive face,—quite a strange face.”

The Russian, as he spoke, shuddered nervously.

“Will you excuse my giving you a piece of advice?” I added.

“Pray do.”

“Well, then, I think you would do wisely not to pay further atten-

tion to your neighbour. Without wishing it, you might get embroiled in a quarrel. He seems a rough customer, and, at any rate, is a very ill-bred man. You must have noticed the rude, free-and-easy manner in which he thrust himself between you and me to look out of the carriage-window: he did it at Amiens, as well as at Abbeville. I felt angry, but held my tongue from prudence. With a man like that, I fancy, there would be little space between a word and a blow, —and the idea of coming to fist-cuffs with him does not tempt me."

From Amiens to Creil we continued to converse. I found him a well-bred, agreeable companion, and we soon discovered that we had some acquaintances in common, both in Paris and in St Petersburg. He handed me his card, and, in my turn, I told him who I was. His name was Count Boris Stachowitch, and he lived in Paris, Avenue Friedland.

"How small the world is!" said my new friend. "Have you noticed that no man of a certain age, if he has seen something of the world, can ever meet any one with whom he is not connected by some anterior link? Half an hour ago you were a perfect stranger to me. The few words we have exchanged have shown me that one of my cousins is a friend of yours, and that I was at school with one of your relations. That does not surprise me; it is always so. I would wager that if I talked to your neighbour there who is snoring so sweetly, I would find out that he and I have something in common. Oh, what a little world it is! I have often wondered how anybody can manage to hide in it. I had, not long ago, a very interesting conversation on that very subject with one of the heads of the Secret Police. He was a man of wide experience,

who could reckon by hundreds the thieves and murderers he had helped to capture. Among other things, he told me: 'Many crimes are never discovered at all, and those who have committed them of course elude justice; but scarcely one criminal out of a thousand, when once known, can long escape the grasp of the law. Sooner or later, whatever disguise he may have assumed, in whatever hole he may have taken refuge, we find him out. The trace of blood is never effaced. Once on the track, we are pretty sure never to lose it. The world is ——'

Here our conversation was interrupted suddenly. Stachowitch had been speaking loud enough for every word of his to be overheard by his neighbour, the man from Verton. This latter got up hastily, and, as at Abbeville and at Amiens, pushed forward between us to look out. All at once, before we could offer any opposition, he opened the door rapidly and stepped down on the narrow ledge which runs along the carriages.

We looked at each other in mute surprise. The next instant the man had leaped out on the line. I leant forward and saw him rebound forwards, and then, with outstretched arms, fall flat upon his face. In a few seconds he was hidden from view by the wall of a garden which skirted the line.

The Russian had turned very pale. The four Frenchmen ceased their talking, and looked anxiously towards us. The Englishman was awake at last, and was looking for the railway rug the Verton man had thrust under the seat.

"What does it all mean?" said Stachowitch.

I could only shrug my shoulders, for I could not make it out myself. We were soon to be enlightened.

We were drawing near to Paris

and the train was beginning to slacken its speed. About a hundred yards from the terminus it came to a stand-still. Two railway officials, who had been waiting for us on either side of the line, jumped on to the train, and passing along the carriages, said in a loud voice, while the engine began to move on, "Keep your places, gentlemen, if you please."

A minute later we entered the station. The place was empty. Then from the superintendent's office there came out two gentlemen, followed by one of the higher officials of the railway—one of them wore the ribbon of the Legion of Honour. They walked quickly up to the train, and stopped for a few seconds before each carriage. At last they came to ours. The gentleman with the red ribbon looked in, and cast a scrutinising glance on each of us in turn.

"Has any one left this carriage since Verton station?" he asked.

He spoke to me, as being the nearest to him; but one of the Frenchmen cut in before me, and related rapidly all he knew about the eighth traveller—namely, that he had joined us at Verton, and had jumped from the train before it reached St Denis. "This gentleman," he added, pointing to me, "can, no doubt, indicate the precise spot, for it was on his side that the man—a villanous-looking fellow—escaped."

The police agent—as we had rightly judged him to be—requested me then to describe the missing passenger. I was able to answer accurately, for I had examined the man closely.

While I spoke the agent nodded repeatedly, as in assent.

"No doubt," he said, when I had concluded my description, "that is the man. Please, sir, to follow me."

I gathered up my wraps and got

down. Stachowitch followed. The railway guards shouted, "Paris," and while the platform was filling with passengers and porters, Stachowitch and I entered the office of the Special Commissary of Police. The order was given for an engine to be placed at our disposal, and a few minutes later I found myself seated in a luggage-van, in company with the police agent, his attendant—a vigorous and apparently agile man of about thirty—two gendarmes, and lastly, the young Russian, who had obtained leave to come with us, after he had related to the agent the altercation which had taken place between the Verton stranger and himself. I had already described the spot where the man had jumped out, and had added that I felt confident of being able to point it out exactly.

On the way I learned from the police agent that the Baronne de Massieux, who lived with her daughter on a property near Boulogne-sur Mer, had been murdered on the previous night, and that her coachman, Béchouard, was strongly suspected of being the author of the crime.

"The description of the man was telegraphed to us barely an hour ago," he added, "and we would have been in time to arrest him on the arrival of the train, if he had not thought fit to make off, before reaching Paris. But that won't avail him much. He can't be far, and we will soon overtake him. A murderer can no more be lost in the world, than a needle in a bundle of hay. All that's wanted, in either case, is patience to look for them."

Stachowitch nodded to me, as much as to say, "You see, I was right; the world is too small to hide in." But there was no time for further conversation. We had passed St Denis, and we were now

moving on slowly, in order to give me time to point out the spot.

"I know that house again," I said; "and this is the garden wall. Here is the place; but see! the man is there still—he has not moved.—He is dead!"

We all got down. And there, just beyond the rails, flat on his face, lay the poor wretch we were seeking. His left arm was doubled beneath his chest, but the right arm was stretched out forwards, and was covered with earth. The cambric handkerchief had come undone in the violence of the fall, and from the reopened wound it had concealed, a few drops of blood had trickled. The body lay motionless.

The police agent's assistant, who

had been the first to jump out, sprang upon the prostrate form with the eagerness of a blood-hound on the track. He stooped down, and taking hold of a shoulder and a leg, with a dexterity which betrayed professional practice, he turned the body slowly over. Sure enough! the man was dead. The face was uninjured. At the corners of the mouth there was a slight foam of a reddish tint, and a few drops of blood which had gushed from the nostrils stood clotted on the upper lip. The wide-open eyes, of which only the whites were visible, were horrible to see. Stachowitch, who had leant over my shoulder to look at the corpse, uttered a loud cry, and fell senseless to the ground.

II.

The murder of the Baronne de Massieux was soon forgotten by the general public. The judicial inquiry had established that the crime had been committed by Béchouard alone: he had not long eluded punishment, and was dead. Human justice had obtained satisfaction: the case offered no particular interest, and people ceased to talk about it. Two persons only thought of it often,—Madame de Massieux's young daughter Marie, who mourned the loss of a beloved mother, and Boris Stachowitch, whose life appeared to have been deeply influenced by that tragic event.

It was December, and six months had gone by since I had made the young Russian's acquaintance on the railway. We saw a good deal of each other. We lived in the same part of the town, had many common intimates, dined at the same *restaurant*, and rarely spent a day without meeting. My new friend interested me. Stachowitch,

on many subjects, had original, and even wildly eccentric, ideas; but it was evident that, with him, there was no affectation either in speech or thought. I soon discovered many excellent qualities both of heart and mind in the young Russian; he was truthful, charitable, generous, and singularly gentle; he was eager for information, and, considering his age and position, had read and learned much. He was, in the true sense of the word, amiable. I should add, that I felt pity for him. Stachowitch, it was evident, was unhappy, but I found it impossible to discover the cause of his secret sorrow. He never complained, and when I ventured to question him discreetly, his answers were so evasive, and his embarrassment so evident, that, for fear of offending, I soon desisted from any inquiry as to the cause of his constant and gloomy preoccupation. His apartments were splendid; he had carriages and horses, and was reck-

less of expense: evidently it was no want of money that troubled him. Nor could his health give him cause for anxiety. True, he he always seemed languid and depressed; but he enjoyed an excellent appetite: and during an excursion we had made together, I had had opportunities of ascertaining that he was not only an indefatigable walker and a bold rider, but also that he could indulge in the most violent bodily exercise without any apparent effort.

He was a capital fencer, and was known as such in all the fencing schools of Paris. He was considered eccentric, but he was a general favourite, and people were disposed to be indulgent to his peculiarities. For instance, there were men belonging to the club with whom he positively declined to fence, without giving any reason for his refusal. It was certainly no fear of defeat or loss of reputation for dexterity which actuated him, for he bore being beaten with very good grace; and, moreover, some of those with whom he refused to measure himself were notoriously less expert than he was.

Apparently, in the choice of his adversaries he followed his caprice, for which he always offered some polite excuse, but no frank or sufficient reason.

I was present on one occasion when this peculiarity of his was shown in a very characteristic way.

"I say, Stachowitch," said the young Vicomte de Drieux to him one day, "take your foil; I want to try my strength with you."

"Excuse me, my good fellow," replied Stachowitch; "you know very well that I will not fence with you."

"But why not? Do be rational. You don't fear, I suppose, that I will run you through?"

"Not a bit; only I would rather not have you for an adversary."

Drieux placed himself in front of Stachowitch, and said with mock gravity,—

"There must be an end of this, Count Stachowitch. I must know why you hold my doughty sword in such respect. I am resolved to fight you; and if you refuse me satisfaction here, in the fencing-school, I insist that you do me the honour of killing me on other ground."

"Pray, do not make those jokes, my dear Drieux. You do not know what pain you give me."

Drieux and I looked at each other in mute astonishment: Stachowitch had turned pale.

"What a queer fellow you are," said Drieux, laughingly; but noticing the gloomy expression of the Russian's countenance, he added, more seriously, "I value your friendship too much, Stachowitch, not to yield in this matter. So that is settled: I never will ask you again to fence with me. But on your part, pray satisfy my curiosity, and tell me what is your objection."

"Do not be angry," replied Stachowitch, "and believe me when I say this is not mere caprice. I have a presentiment that you would come to grief if you fought against me. Your hand, Drieux. We are friends, are we not?"

"To be sure we are. But that does not prevent your being the queerest and most incomprehensible of men."

Stachowitch, who seemed to have a strong liking for me, and was disposed to be confidential on most subjects, never referred again to this incident when we were alone. For some time past, it must be added, we had matters of greater importance to discuss. I had fathomed with no great difficulty the cause of the strong affection the young Russian had conceived for me; and I had easily found out

why, in spite of the difference in our ages, I was, of all his friends, the one with whom he liked best to talk. The fact was, that I was the only person with whom he could speak of Marie de Massieux.

His theory of the "smallness" of the world had received new and striking confirmation. Very soon after the death of Madame de Massieux he had learned that his sister, the Countess de Villiers, married to a Frenchman, had known the murdered lady; and, moreover, that his friend Drieux, whom he met daily at his club and elsewhere, was related to the Massieux. Since she had become an orphan, Marie de Massieux had lived with her aunt, Madame de Baudy, in the Faubourg St Honoré, in the very same house as Madame de Villiers.

Stachowitch was delighted when he made these discoveries; for several days he recurred to the subject continually, talking to me incessantly of the "small, small world."

"Just ride out daily for a fortnight," he said, "and you will know every horseman and horsewoman of Paris: only follow a course of concerts for a month, and you will know every amateur of music in the town. And you call that a great capital! About the size of a play-house, my good fellow. Well, maybe a little larger, but not much. If you would only take the trouble, in a month you might know all who live in it; and when you did, you would find out that hardly ten in the whole number are complete strangers to you. One has written a book that you have read; another has said something that you have heard; this one you know from meeting him every day at the same hour on the boulevard; that other is in love with some woman you know. Indeed, you may notice that there is general and instinctive distrust felt of any one who has no link with

something or somebody that is known. The world is very, very small, I tell you. One can discover nothing in it that was quite unknown before."

Stachowitch, who frequently went to see his sister, had one day met at her house Madame de Baudy and Marie de Massieux. He had been introduced, and Marie had from the first felt a painful interest in him, having heard that he was the last person to whom her mother's murderer had spoken.

"What induced you to notice that man so particularly?" she asked one day, when he had told her that he had been very near having a quarrel with Béchouard. "Had you any notion that he was a murderer?"

"I neither knew nor guessed anything about him, but his face was strange and horrible. Curiosity and fear attracted me towards him. He had upturned eyes—the eyes of a dead man,—white eyes." And Stachowitch shuddered as he spoke.

"White eyes!" repeated Marie with surprise. "What do you mean? I knew the man; he had wicked grey eyes—I think I see them now."

Stachowitch made no reply, and turned the conversation into another channel. In a few minutes Vicomte de Drieux was announced. He cast a not very friendly look towards the Russian, said a few words to his cousin, and then sat down near Madame de Baudy, at whose house, for the last few months, he had been in the habit of meeting Stachowitch almost daily. This latter, for whom time passed quickly whenever he could talk with Marie, became suddenly aware that he had paid an unconscionably long visit, and took his leave at once. From Madame de Baudy's he came straight to my house, and I had to listen for the hundredth

time to the recital of the first chapters of his love for Marie. If I did not always lend a very attentive ear, at any rate I heard him with friendly sympathy. And thus it was that I became his dearest friend, from whom he was constantly seeking advice and encouragement.

"Take heart," I said, "all is going on well. You are timid,—that's all. You seem to expect that the girl is to declare her feelings of her own accord. It is asking too much. I cannot understand your hesitation. From what your sister has told you, you have reason to feel sure that Madame de Bandy does not object to your paying your addresses to her niece. Indeed, any looker-on can see as much as that. If she did, would she allow you to see Mademoiselle de Massieux every day, and talk to her as much as you please? The aunt is on your side. That of itself is a capital card in your hand. Your rival, Drieux, inspires me with no apprehension. He is a charming fellow, I admit; but he does not realise the ideal which the poetical heart of your beloved has, doubtless, formed for itself. I have noticed that she is always joking with M. de Drieux, and that, with him, she never launches into one of those grand philosophical subjects which, strangely and comically enough, form the favourite theme of conversation between true and virtuous lovers. Drieux tells his pretty cousin many amusing stories, and I have no doubt that she finds time pass very pleasantly in his company. She learns from him what plays are being acted, who are the best dressed women in Paris, and the name of the favourite for the 'Grand Prix de Paris.' All this is very useful knowledge for a young lady who hopes to be at the head of a *salon* of her own before many winters have gone by;

but it is the subject that interests her, and not the teller. If her aunt would but allow her to read the 'Figaro,' she would find in it ample compensation for the loss of her cousin's conversation. Drieux succeeds in making Mademoiselle de Massieux laugh very often. That's an excellent sign for you, for a man who makes a young girl laugh is not a dangerous rival. He may be successful with older women, but never with a young girl. In very young people love does not manifest itself under a smiling aspect. Love, in their case, is a sentimental comedy, which must be played very seriously. For the more mature spectator, who has gone through it all, and who, alas! will never go through it again, there is something at once laughable and touching in such seriousness. Well! you and Mademoiselle de Massieux are both quite perfect in your lover's parts. She tells you of her passion for flowers; she plays Chopin's music for you,—for Drieux she plays waltzes: and lastly, I have heard her describe to you, with gentle melancholy, her moonlight walks under the old trees of the park at Massieux. All this is as it should be, and the charming girl will, I have no doubt, be some day an excellent mistress of a well-ordered household. You, on your part, recommend good books to her; you read verses to her, and you lead her out on the balcony to make her admire the glorious constellations of the firmament—Orion, Cassiopeia, and Ursa Major. This is as innocent as it is instructive, and it serves to imbue her with profound admiration for your boundless knowledge. You teach her the elements of geology; she does not understand, but she listens with scrupulous attention. You explain to her the beauties of a Murillo, the deep and hidden meaning of Don Quixote; you are ready

to initiate her into the music of Wagner or the philosophy of Kant. All this, as I said, is just as it ought to be. Go on, my young friend, you are in the right way. Take heart, and ask for the hand of Mademoiselle de Massieux: you will obtain it, I warrant you."

Poor fellow! He listened to these and similar speeches with every wish to believe what I said, but I could not induce him to follow my advice. Something he would not tell me weighed upon his heart, and prevented his putting an end to the doubts which tormented him.

One evening, after a long silence, Stachowitch asked me suddenly whether, in my opinion, a man who had not long to live was justified in marrying.

The question took me by surprise. I got up, and standing in front of him, examined him attentively. He had grown thin; he looked ill and weary, and there was an unusual brightness in his eyes, which wandered restlessly from one object to another.

"Stachowitch, you grieve me," I said in a fatherly tone. "Come now, man, look me full in the face."

His wild look gave place at once to a serene and friendly expression.

"You look like a kind and venerable grandfather," he said; "it does me good to look at you."

I could not help laughing. "You do me too much honour, and I do not ask as much as that. I am your senior by nearly fifteen years, it is true; but that is no reason for speaking of me as a grandfather. But never mind me; let us speak of yourself. What now? Do you fancy you are going to die? What does it all mean? This is really pushing eccentricity too far. Even your love affords no excuse. And pray, what will it please you to die of?—of heart-disease, or of consumption?

Any other illness, I suppose, you would not think sufficiently poetical. What do you complain of?"

"I do not complain."

"Then why did you ask me that absurd question as to whether a man who was soon to die had a right to marry?"

"I am wretched. Nobody knows, nobody can suspect, how much I suffer."

He spoke with sorrowful resignation, staring fixedly at the fire which was burning in the grate. I saw tears gather slowly under his eyelids, and trickle silently down his wan cheeks. I laid my two hands on his shoulders, and this time I spoke seriously:

"You are a *malade imaginaire*, my dear Stachowitch. Yours is not an exceptional case, and certainly not one that is considered incurable by the faculty. Promise me to see a doctor."

He shook his head.

"Do it to please me," I said.

"What good can a doctor do me?"

"More than you fancy; and I must insist upon your consulting one. You have reposed confidence in me, and I am your friend. This imposes duties upon me which I am ready to fulfil, and gives me privileges which I mean to exercise. To-morrow, at one, I will call for you, and take you to a doctor whose opinion you may trust. You must go with me, or tell me why you refuse to do so."

He turned to me and replied very gently, "I will go with you quite willingly. I am grateful for the interest you take in me; but, believe me, it is of no use. Do not be angry with me, and, above all, do not give me up. I am miserable."

The doctor's opinion was most satisfactory. He pronounced my friend to be apparently in good health; heart, lungs, and all essen-

tial organs were in good working order. As to the nervous excitement to which I called his attention, he could not be brought to attach much importance to it, as he felt convinced that it would yield to the regimen which he prescribed. He dismissed us, saying to Stachowitch:

"You are constituted to live a hundred years, my dear sir. Above all, do not disquiet yourself about your health."

When we got out into the street, Stachowitch shrugged his shoulders despondingly.

"What?" said I; "are you not satisfied? What do you want? Do you wish to live to a hundred and fifty?"

"I knew beforehand," he replied, "that this visit would be of no use."

And, indeed, there was no amendment in his sad condition: on the contrary, his melancholy increased daily to a disquieting degree. I had almost made up my mind to return alone to the doctor's and ask for further directions, when an unforeseen occurrence changed the whole position of affairs.

III.

Winter was over, and we were in March. I had been obliged to accept many invitations, and, for the first time since I had made Stachowitch's acquaintance, some days had gone by without our meeting.

One night as I was going home, at about eleven, I chanced to pass before his door. Glancing up at his window and seeing a light, I went up and found him busy writing.

"I am very glad to see you," he said, coming forward to meet me. "I have a favour to ask of you."

He begged me to sit down, and took a chair himself in front of me. I noticed at once that he was labouring under great and painful excitement.

"What has happened?" I asked.

Stachowitch rose and walked up and down the room with a hurried step. Then stopping before me, he said abruptly:

"Do you think me a coward?"

"Decidedly not," I answered.

"What do you mean?"

"I have been insulted—grievously insulted,—and I cannot fight the man."

"Hem! it's awkward. — There are men who will not fight from principle. It is a question of con-

science—or of taste. There is no discussing it, but——"

"You are mistaken," said Stachowitch, quickly. "I have fought more than one duel in my life, and I may fight again. But it is Drieux who has insulted me——" He appeared to hesitate.

"Well," said I to encourage him to proceed, "Drieux or another, what does it matter?"

"I cannot fight him."

"Why not?"

"I cannot; I must not." He spoke with great animation.

"My good fellow," I said, rising from my seat, "I am quite at your service; but on one condition: you must give up speaking in riddles, and you must tell me clearly what has occurred."

"Drieux has insulted me."

"You have told me that three times already."

"I am entitled to demand satisfaction."

"We will see about that when you have been good enough to give me all the particulars of this business. Drieux is a man of honour, and he will not refuse you satisfaction if you have a right to demand it."

"But I cannot fight him."

I was beginning to lose patience.

"I will come back to-morrow," I said. "I trust you will be sufficiently calm by that time, to be able to speak intelligibly. Good-night."

"Stop, I beseech you. Do not leave me! Help me!"

"So be it. I remain. Now be calm; give me a light. Thanks! And now, please, light your cigarette.—All right! Are you ready? Well, then, tell me now why you will not fight Drieux."

He looked fixedly at me, and his staring, wide-open eyes assumed an expression of unspeakable horror.

"Because I will not be his murderer," he said at last slowly, emphasising each word.

"You grow more and more mysterious."

"Because I am sure to kill him if we fight."

With an undisguised gesture of impatience, I answered somewhat crossly: "Enough of all this; we can talk about it later. Tell me what has taken place. Until I know, I do not see that my interference can be of any use."

The story Stachowitch told me at last was commonplace enough. The good feeling that had formerly existed between Drieux and himself had for some time past undergone a gradual change. The two young men had become jealous rivals, and had watched each other with distrust whenever they met at Madame de Baudy's. Drieux had proposed to Marie, and had been refused. Since then he had ceased to visit at his aunt's house. His pride had been nearly as much wounded as his affections. He felt sore and angry with every one, but more especially with Stachowitch. When they met, Drieux bowed stiffly, and with an aggrieved air. The Russian, feeling sure that he meant to pick a quarrel, avoided

him as much as he could. In the afternoon of that very day they had met again at the fencing-school. There Drieux had asked Stachowitch abruptly whether he would do him the honour of a match with him.

"I refused," continued Stachowitch, "and I feel certain that I did so in the most courteous terms; but Drieux would not be put off, and it became evident that he had an object in view. He insisted in such an aggressive tone, that I might well have considered myself affronted, had I not been resolved to avoid a quarrel by every possible means. Some members of the club who witnessed the painful scene tried to interfere. They pointed out to Drieux how irrational this outburst of anger was; they reminded him that they had all made up their minds long ago to put up with my apparent caprice in the choice of my adversaries,—that nobody took offence at it, and that Drieux, by acting differently, seemed to be reading them a lesson. Nothing could pacify him: on the contrary, raising his voice still more, he apostrophised me in such an offensive tone, that I was obliged at last to break through my self-imposed restraint, and to request him to explain or to retract his words. He merely laughed, saying that his words were intelligible enough to require no commentary; that he had no reason to retract them, and that it rested with me either to accept them or to demand satisfaction. That is how the matter stands. What do you advise?"

I replied that the first thing was to try all means of conciliation. "I will see your opponent to-morrow morning. He may have got good advice from his pillow. I will try and make him understand that he is committing himself foolishly by his obstinacy in this matter. Do not worry yourself unneces-

sarily. Happen what may, your honour is safe in my hands."

Early next morning I called on Drieux. He evidently expected my visit. At my very first words he stopped me, and giving me the names of two of his friends, begged that I would settle the matter with them. I tried in vain to obtain an explanation from him. He listened politely, and his behaviour was unobjectionable, but to all my remarks he merely replied, that his friends having kindly consented to conduct this business, it was no longer any concern of his, and that he felt quite satisfied that they would do what was right. I took leave of him without having made the slightest impression, and went to see his friends.

Drieux had taken care to select two very young men, who did not belong to our club, and who, being duly impressed with the importance of their functions as seconds, would probably have been disappointed if they had not had to play a part in an "affair of honour." With them, likewise, I was completely unsuccessful.

"But," they argued, "why should we hinder those two gentlemen from fighting if they wish it? A hostile meeting between them is unavoidable, unless your friend gives up demanding satisfaction. The Vicomte de Drieux has declared positively to us that he will make no apology. He has requested us to be his seconds, and we have accepted: nothing remains now but to settle the conditions of their meeting, if Count Stachowitch considers that any reparation is due to him. We admit his claim, and we are at your orders."

I made an appointment with these hot-brained young fellows, and returned to Stachowitch to give an account of my mission, and to inform him that all my attempts at conciliation had failed.

"I knew as much beforehand," he said; "but now my conscience will not reproach me. I have done all I could to avoid this unfortunate duel, and the blood that will be shed will be on the head of the aggressor."

Stachowitch spoke calmly, but in a tone of despondency which few men in his situation would have cared to exhibit.

"You take too tragical a view of the matter," I said. "A man has insulted you; you demand satisfaction, and he agrees to fight with you; this is no very unusual occurrence. You have right on your side, and temper too; that is the essential point."

The duel took place at daybreak the next morning, in the wood of Vincennes. I had felt some apprehension lest Stachowitch should not behave becomingly on the ground, for the day before he had given way to his intense anxiety, quite regardless of my presence. But when the morning came, and we were in the carriage together, he took care to reassure me.

"You seem to fear that I may betray weakness in presence of my adversary. Make yourself easy on that score: I know what I have to do, and will give you no cause to be ashamed of me."

And, indeed, he bore himself excellently. He was serious, dignified, and collected. When he had laid aside his coat and waistcoat, and loosened his neck-tie, and I saw him standing, sword in hand, in front of Drieux, I could not help admiring his noble presence, his supple and vigorous frame.

Drieux attacked him impetuously. At first Stachowitch seemed content to parry the furious thrusts of his adversary; but after a while he warmed to the work, and attacked in his turn. More than once I fancied that I had seen the point of his sword graze the breast

of his adversary, but he never touched him. All at once he lowered his weapon and stepped back. We ran towards him; he had been wounded rather seriously in his right arm. Further fighting was pronounced impossible. Drieux gloomily and slowly prepared to depart, while his seconds eagerly offered their assistance. I declined it with thanks, and they too, bowing low, retired.

I then turned to Stachowitch, whom I had left in the hands of the doctor. I was struck with the expression of his countenance, which was radiant with delight.

"Heaven be praised!" he cried. "It is well over. If you knew what a weight has been lifted from my heart!"

I was rather surprised at this overflowing joy on the part of a wounded man, and I rejoined,—

"I would rather Drieux had got that wound, but as you seem so delighted with it, I have no business to complain."

When the doctor had dressed and bandaged the wound he left us, and Stachowitch and I drove

back alone to the Avenue Friedland.

On the way the Russian could not restrain the expression of his joy. At times he appeared absorbed in his own thoughts; but these must have been of a pleasant nature, for his face, which I had always seen so sad and anxious, was lighted up by a smile of intense satisfaction.

"I feel as if I had come out of a bad dream," he said. "Here am I awake, and I now know that all that troubled me was only a chimera. I, too, may hope to be happy. This very day I will go to Madame de Baudy's and make my offer. I feel confident that I will be accepted. I have been miserable so long. My turn to be happy has come at last. Yes, I will succeed. Good-bye! Congratulate me; I'm so happy!"

I could not understand this exultation; but as I did not wish to damp his joy, I took leave of Stachowitch at the door of his own apartment, well pleased at heart that this duel, which I had dreaded, had not had more serious consequences.

IV.

Stachowitch's proposal had been well received by Madame de Baudy and her niece, and my friend was the happiest of men. He was transformed. The unaccountable sadness of former days had given place to a joy so exuberant, that I had some trouble in getting accustomed to it.

After all, I could see nothing very extraordinary in what had happened to Stachowitch. Marie de Massieux was, no doubt, a charming girl, and, to a certain point, his satisfaction seemed natural enough: still, with a little clear-sightedness, he might have known beforehand that he would be accepted, and I

could not comprehend why he was so strangely surprised at his own good fortune.

"I am the happiest of men," he kept repeating; to which I would reply, "I am delighted to hear it; but really, my good fellow, it is your own fault if you were not as happy as this three months ago."

Upon this, Stachowitch would look at me wistfully, as though he were deliberating with himself whether he would confide something to me or not. But he kept silent, and left his exceeding happiness as unexplained as his former sadness had been.

Drieux had left Paris immedi-

ately after the duel, and I learned by chance that he was travelling in Greece.

"I wish him well, with all my heart," said Stachowitch, when I told him this. "I owe him all the happiness of my life."

"At your riddles again!" I exclaimed. "What possible connection can there be between Drieux and your happiness?"

Stachowitch smiled mysteriously, as if to say, "I alone know, but I am not mistaken."

This conversation ended as many others had ended before; and when Boris Stachowitch left me, I could not help wondering whether there was not something disordered in the state of his mind.

This doubt recurred with greater force some days later, under the following circumstances. One evening, towards ten o'clock, I went to see Stachowitch by appointment. We were to go together to spend the evening with the Countess de Villiers. The servant who opened the door, knowing how intimate I was with his master, let me go in alone. The drawing-room was empty. I crossed it noiselessly, thanks to the thick carpet which covered the floor, and I was on the point of entering the bed-room, when, on the very threshold, my steps were arrested by the strangest sight.

Two lighted candelabra stood on the chimney-piece, and were brilliantly reflected in a large mirror; and in front of that mirror stood Stachowitch, indulging in the most singular grimaces. First, he looked at himself with that deep, searching gaze, which reminded me involuntarily of the way in which he had looked at the murderer Béchouard in the railway carriage; then he drew back a few paces, without taking his eyes off his own image in the glass—which, naturally, at that distance, became less distinct. After a while he began to screw up

his eyes, draw down the corners of his mouth, wrinkle up his brow, and, in short, try to impart to his face a wearied and dejected expression. When he had performed these tricks for a few seconds, he once more drew near to the mirror, and, to my intense astonishment, I saw him take up a crayon, and, like an actor about to play the part of an old man, trace with it wrinkles on his forehead and round his mouth.

I looked on in mute and painful surprise. Here was I, the unsuspected witness of a dismal farce—of an act of madness! I retreated on tip-toe to the door of the drawing-room, and after waiting a minute to recover my composure, I opened the door, closed it again noisily, and, from the entrance, called out to Stachowitch.

"I will be with you in an instant," he answered, from the inner room, with no apparent emotion in his voice: "read the paper, to take patience."

He closed the door of the bedroom, without showing himself, and, after leaving me alone for a few minutes, he appeared, with the smiling, cheerful countenance which he had worn ever since his duel with Drieux.

I was sorely tempted to question him about the strange scene of which I had been an involuntary spectator, but the fear of appearing obtrusive kept me silent.

We went out together. At the corner of Avenue Friedland and of the Faubourg St Honoré we took a cab.

"Here's a good number," I said, glancing at the little ticket which the coachman had given me,—*"No. 1107."*

"Why should that number be better than another?" inquired Stachowitch.

"Because it can be divided by nine."

Stachowitch looked at me interrogatively.

"I make it a rule," I said, "to read attentively the number of every cab I take, and every house I go to. If the sum total produced by adding up all the figures of which the number is composed can be divided by nine, I call it a good number, and I am pleased. If, on the contrary, the addition of the figures gives me thirteen as a result—as, for instance, in the case of No. 643—I feel uncomfortable. I like to go and see friends whose houses are luckily numbered; whereas I live in dread of quarrelling with people who live at Nos. 49, 67, &c. &c. Fortunately, there are not many such. Now, for example, I like your street, because there is no No. 13 in Avenue Friedland. The houses on the side of the odd numbers follow thus: No. 11, No. 11 *bis*, No. 15. The owner of that No. 11 *bis* is a wise man. I do not know him, but I cannot but respect him."

Stachowitch listened to me with deep attention.

"Seriously, do you believe in such things?" he asked.

As I scarcely knew whether he was in earnest or only joking, I answered, gravely, "Of course I do."

"Then I suppose you have likewise a fear of Friday, and would not choose that day for setting out on a journey?"

"Oh! oh!" I replied, keeping up the same serious tone, "that would be sheer superstition. To take account of No. 9 and No. 13 is quite another thing. It is a habit one may cultivate and cherish till it develops into a full-blown mania. One may indulge in it quite harmlessly, twenty times a-day; and, for my part, I find that it adds considerably to the enjoyment of life."

"Take care," exclaimed Stacho-

witch, sharply; "you are playing a dangerous game. Believe me, I speak as one who knows by sad experience."

"Are you speaking seriously?"

"Quite seriously."

"Then, my good fellow, let me tell you, no less seriously, that you are once more becoming incomprehensible. I would like to know what harm can accrue to me or to any one else from my preference for cab No. 999, over cab No. 13? Or why should I not, when selecting an apartment for friends or for myself, be attracted by No. 27 rather than by No. 85?"

"Every mania is dangerous. *Mania*, *Maniacus* are terrible words, my dear friend. Any one who leaves the path of reason, is on his way to madness."

I did not care to continue the conversation, as the serious turn it had taken seemed to me, considering the subject, rather absurd. I therefore merely replied by an "Oh yes! of course, quite true, quite true!" knowing by experience that unconditional assent generally puts an end to all argument. Then we talked of other things. I must add that I felt disinclined to go on with the joke. The remembrance of the scene before the mirror, which I had just witnessed, made me feel uncomfortable when I heard Stachowitch speak of madness.

The painful impression produced by that scene wore away quickly enough. The behaviour of my young Russian friend during the days that followed was, as far as I could see, perfectly rational, and the remembrance of what I had seen was fast being effaced. I tried to think of it as a mere childish freak.

There are many men, and women too, for whom their own image reflected in a mirror has strange and peculiar fascination. Not only do

they find pleasure in looking at themselves constantly—a thing which seems scarcely explicable by any rational motive—but I have known, and still know, not a few who smile and make eyes at themselves, and who, for their sole and private satisfaction—for they are always ashamed when surprised in the act—assume in turn pensive, cheerful, sad, or angry airs. I persuaded myself that Stachowitch had indulged in this innocent foolery. It made him a little ridiculous in my eyes, but did not impair my friendship for him; and I did my best to forget his grimaces before the mirror.

His marriage was fixed for the 8th of June. The last days of May were come. Stachowitch dined almost every day at Madame de Baudy's, returning home about ten. I had formed the habit of going to him at that hour, and we used generally to wind up the evening—those pleasant evenings of the end of May—by sauntering down the Champs Elysées together.

One evening I called at his house at the accustomed hour, and was told that he was out, but that he requested me particularly to wait for him, as he had something important to communicate. I imagined that it was some commission relative to his marriage that he wanted me to execute for him; and having nothing better to do, I settled myself in an arm-chair, and began to read. The evening was beautiful. From the windows I could see the trees of the avenue, and I could hear the roll of the passing carriages. There was nothing in my surroundings likely to produce lugubrious or fantastic ideas.

Suddenly I started up with a cry of terror. Before me, pale as death, with wild and flashing eyes, stood the tall and spectre-like form of Stachowitch.

"Read that! read that!" he cried, in a hoarse voice, without giving me time to speak, and thrusting a crumpled newspaper before my eyes.

Instead of looking at the paper, I surveyed Stachowitch with surprise.

"What is the matter?" I inquired.

"Read, read," he repeated. "You will see how right I was. Oh! my terrible forebodings!"

I took the paper, and read the paragraph to which he pointed with an unsteady finger. It was a despatch of the *Agence Havas* in these words:—

"We learn from Athens that Vicomte de Drieux has been murdered by brigands during an excursion he had undertaken in the neighbourhood of this town. The identity of the victim has been established by the French Consul. M. de Drieux was stabbed in the heart with a dagger. The police are making active search to discover the authors of the crime."

"Poor fellow!" I said. "This is, indeed, sad news, and I am truly sorry."

"I knew, I knew that Drieux would die so," exclaimed Stachowitch.

This exclamation struck me as strange. It occurred to me suddenly that Stachowitch had shown great reluctance to fight with Drieux because he felt sure that he would kill him. In spite of myself I felt a queer sensation of awe creep over me; but I did my best to overcome it, saying to myself that, after all, it could only be a strange coincidence, and that my duty was to recall Stachowitch by argument to reality and sober reason, instead of following him in the fanciful theories and imaginings which seemed to have taken hold of him. I, therefore, urged him strongly to tell me what it was that troubled him.

His excitement was so great that he was thrown off his guard, and he could no longer maintain the reserve he had so long imposed upon himself. After a while he consented to give me an explanation, but even then his agitation did not subside. He walked up and down the room, speaking in a loud voice, and gesticulating vehemently. His speech was so disconnected, and touched on so

many points in quick succession, that for some minutes I could scarcely understand what he was saying. Gradually, however, he became more intelligible, and when he had done speaking I was in full possession of his sad story.

I cannot transcribe it here as he told it; but, in substance, this is what has remained engraved on my memory.

V.

The story of my friend, Count Boris Stachowitch was as follows: "One day I was seated near a beautiful girl at a large dinner party. Her figure was faultless. I do not remember to have ever seen such lovely shoulders, or such a perfect hand and arm. Her large, blue, liquid eyes beamed with intelligence; her mouth was fresh and rosy. The line of the eyebrow was exquisite, and the long, thick eyelashes lent inexpressible charm to her enchanting countenance when she looked down. I was literally bewitched by such a combination of beauty; and, so long as the dinner lasted, I was exclusively occupied with my neighbour. She listened with flattering attention when I spoke to her; at times she smiled with good-humoured familiarity, as though we had been old friends; at others she assumed a grave and almost solemn expression, as if all I was saying were worthy of her most serious attention. From time to time she raised her eyes to heaven, and seemed absorbed in a gentle reverie; and then again she would cast them down, and veil them for a few seconds with the magnificent fringe of her eyelashes. The more I looked at her, the more beautiful she appeared to me.

her to give us some music. She required no pressing, and executed some difficult pieces of music with the precision and taste of a master. Then she sang. Her voice was powerful, and wonderfully cultivated. Never in my whole life had I met with so accomplished a being. She was at once surrounded and assailed with compliments, and to every one in turn she replied in a few words of graceful and becoming modesty. My eyes followed her wherever she went. Suddenly, I saw her go with timid steps up to a middle-aged lady who had been seated in front of the piano, and whom nobody appeared to have noticed.

"The face of the lady was not quite new to me, and yet I tried in vain to recollect where I had seen it before. I examined her attentively. She was not ugly, and yet there was something in her appearance which was singularly repellant. It was a harsh, cold, and even cruel countenance. She was tall and thin, and wore a plain, dark-coloured dress. Her hands, which were encased in black shiny gloves, were singularly small. Her thin hair, black as jet, was dressed simply and unpretendingly. Her skin, of the colour of wax, was dried up like that of a mummy, and her eyes, which seemed to take heed of

"After dinner our hostess begged

all that was passing around, were deep sunk in their sockets. Her lips were thin and colourless.

"What an odious creature!" I said to myself. "That woman must have a heart of stone."

"Just then she raised her eyes to the ceiling.

"Where have I seen that face before?" I asked myself again.

"Her eyelids drooped slowly, and closed as if in slumber. I felt more and more convinced that she was no stranger to me.

"Do you know the lady to whom Mademoiselle Olga M. is speaking?" I inquired of an old family friend, who was also very intimate with our host.

"She is Countess M., the mother of your neighbour at dinner."

"What! Can it be possible that so lovely a being has such a mother?"

"The old gentleman smiled.

"I knew the Countess before her marriage," he said. "We used to call her 'the fair Nathalie.' She was incomparably handsomer than her daughter Olga; and moreover, so clever! so amusing! Every man who approached her was captivated. There was no resisting the witchery. I, too, was madly in love with her; and as to your father, Boris, he nearly died of love for 'the fair Nathalie.' Ah me! she was a girl who knew how to make the most of her charms. She talked, she laughed, she danced, she sang like a siren. But neither your father nor myself were what she wanted. Her choice had fallen on Count M., a very rich man; and of course she managed to make him marry her. In the course of five years she bore him three daughters, and by the sixth year she had killed him by her cold, cruel wickedness. Two of her daughters are married; the youngest, Olga, is still free. But if you will listen to good advice, my

young friend, you will have nothing to do with that dangerous beauty. Olga reminds me of her mother at eighteen. The smile is the same, and she knows how to call up that same soft winning look her witch of a mother had. Just look at them both raise their eyes and drop them again in the same fashion; they have the same hands and feet, the same forehead and the same mouth. All that is angular and sharp in the Countess is rounded and soft in her daughter; that is the effect of time. Years will transform your fair Olga as they have transformed my fair Nathalie: thirty years hence the one will be the living image of what the other is now. *Experto crede Roberto.* Good-night, Boris. Do not dream of Olga. Rather, if you needs must dream, let it be of that young girl you see yonder in the pink frock, who is seated quietly and shyly near her mamma, as smiling and as blooming as herself. Just look! she has taken hold of her mother's dress, as if she were afraid of losing her. Olga has no fear of that sort; she knows how to stand alone."

"I withdrew into a corner of the room to think over what I had heard. I am gifted with good eyesight, and at the distance I was from Olga, I could distinguish every feature as plainly as if I had been at her side. Yes, it was true, she resembled her mother,—not at first sight, but only when you stripped her features of the charm of youth. What cold hard looks those eyes might dart! How forbidding that mouth appeared, when, in fancy, I extinguished the lovely smile that was playing round it! 'This, then, is what Olga will be thirty years hence,' I said to myself, as I looked at her mother. All at once, I felt afraid of the girl who had captivated me an hour before. I cannot say why, my thoughts suddenly reverted to

my grandmother and an old great-aunt of mine, both of whom were alive at that time. There was an extraordinary likeness between the two sisters: and yet my father had often told me that his mother, in her youth, had been a beauty; while his aunt, on the contrary, had been a plain girl. A whole train of ideas rushed through my brain concerning the immutable stability of the typical lines in each individual,—lines that external accidents—youth, ease, misfortune, illness, or good health—may dissemble as under a veil for a given time, but which, towards the close of life, stripped of all accidental circumstance or artifice, reveal the original plan, so to speak, upon which the individual was constructed. ‘That original structure,’ I said, ‘is the true man; all else is but a semblance.’ Having come to that conclusion, I left my nook and mingled once more with the crowd. Chance brought me again near Olga. Her expressive look spoke a flattering welcome.

“‘What a meditative air, Sir Philosopher!’ she said. ‘What can you be thinking of? Give me your arm and take me out of this furnace. I am suffocated here.’

“I led her into another room; we went up to a window, and, still leaning on my arm, she raised her beautiful eyes to the starry sky. There was an expression of gentle melancholy on her countenance. I could feel the regular beating of her heart, and a deep sigh upheaved her maiden bosom. . . . And I knew—with absolute certainty I knew—that her whole being was a lie: a lie, the dreamy eye; a lie, the smiling mouth and tender words; a lie, each throb of that stony heart! As she stood there, mute and motionless by my side, like a beautiful statue, I saw her, not as she *seemed* to be, but as she

would be thirty years hence. I could perceive distinctly her real, her *typical* features. They were those of her mother, the woman with the wicked stern eyes and the cruel mouth. I let go her arm and drew away.

“‘What is the matter?’ she said with surprise. ‘You are quite pale.’

“No commonplace excuse was at my command; I was under the spell of truth. ‘You are horrible,’ I faltered out. She burst into a merry laugh, supposing, doubtless, that some joke was intended; but without heeding her, I fled from the house.

“From that day a new life began for me. My former light-heartedness was gone for ever. I could not help scrutinising every new face with peculiar attention. Young people especially interested me. Whenever I met them in company of their parents, I could not take my eyes off them until I had succeeded in metamorphosing their young and blooming faces, and had given them the weary, furrowed, care-worn, harsh, resigned, or desponding countenance—as the case might be—of their father or mother. The youthful complexion faded, so to speak, under my gaze; the skin seemed to wither, and either to pucker into wrinkles, or to distend itself in flabby folds over the blurred and bloated outline; the turned-up corners of a smiling mouth were drawn down; the liquid lustre of the eye was extinguished. My passionate desire to discover the real face of the future under the visage actually before me became a real mania. It often got me into trouble, for strangers have more than once asked me what I meant by my inquisitorial looks. I resolved a hundred times to conquer this unfortunate habit, but it soon overmastered my will. At

theatres, in concert-rooms, I was constantly seeking problems to solve. I looked out for some unknown youthful face, and then, in fancy, I made it grow old. When this was effected, there was no stratagem to which I would not have recourse to get at the father and the mother of the individual I had studied. At first I was frequently obliged to recognise that I had been mistaken; the parents bore no resemblance to the image my fancy had conjured up. I would then seek the cause of my error, and, generally, I was successful in discovering it. At last I ascertained the true laws, the fixed rules in obedience to which each essential feature was to be transformed in the course of years, so as to return to its typical form; and soon I became proficient in the useless, unprofitable, and painful art to which I had devoted myself. One glance was sufficient for me to discover the future under the present visage.

"The period which I may term my apprenticeship did not last long, as I have said; but no sooner had I perfected myself in the art of observation, and acquired the certainty that I could unmistakably discover the typical face under its temporary disguise, than I was struck with the fact that some faces remained, so to speak, *refractory* under my process. It was in vain that I applied to them all the rules that I had drawn up in order to reduce them to their original type; I found it impossible to make them grow old.

"One of these refractory faces was that of my own brother; another was that of a friend of my sister's, a young girl whom I saw daily at home, and whom I secretly worshipped.

"'Why is it,' I would often ask myself, 'that I am unable to transform those two?' I would then

bury my face in my hands and think it over and over again. When I did that, Alexis and Sophie used to appear to me, pale, with closed eyes, but still bearing the stamp of youth upon their features. Soon after I saw their two corpses looking just as they had appeared to my mind's eye. In an excursion on the lake, the boat in which they were together capsized, and both were drowned.

"The deep grief I felt at the loss of my brother and of the girl I loved, to which was added the painful certainty I had now acquired of my power to discern the signs of early death on any countenance, nearly drove me mad. I fell dangerously ill, and for many weeks my life was despaired of. In time I recovered from the malignant fever which had attacked me, but the horrible visions that had haunted me during two years remained.

"I retired to a family estate in Southern Russia, and for a whole year I lived in nearly absolute seclusion. My servants were old,—good and simple people whom I had carefully selected from among my father's peasants. No one else was allowed to approach me.

"One day the mortal *ennui* to which I was a prey begat the unfortunate idea of subjecting my own face to the process which I had been in the habit of applying to others. I discovered that it belonged to the refractory class; it was impossible to make it grow old. I saw myself, pale, with bright eyes and sunken cheeks, but still young—young as I had seen Alexis and Sophie. 'I shall die soon,' I said to myself, and the thought was almost a relief to me. Life had become a burden, and yet I was barely two-and-twenty! When winter came round for the second time, the oppressive solitude to which I had condemned myself

became unbearable. I went to Moscow for a few days, and from thence proceeded to Paris. I thought I would try to enjoy the few days I had still to live. Moreover, I wished to see my sister, the Countess de Villiers, once more before I died.

"During my journey I resumed my experiments. It had become impossible for me to see a human face under any other form than that of the future—the *typical* form. I got used to it. I lived, as it were, in company of old people who wore the mask—transparent for me alone—of youth. I easily recognised the real person beneath the disguise. Some pleased me, and I sought to make friends of them; others appeared hideous, and I avoided them. People set me down as eccentric and queer—I let them talk.

"My illness—for that it was an illness I well knew—was soon to make great and fearful progress. I had proof of this, for the first time, during the journey to Paris.

"When the train in which I was had passed the Belgian frontier, and entered French territory, a railway *employé* got into our carriage to examine the tickets. He had a *refractory* face. I was looking with interest and pity at one who, I knew, was fated to die young, when I suddenly perceived a red line crossing his forehead like the trace of some fearful wound. I could not take my eyes off him as long as he remained near our carriage, and I watched him at every station when the train stopped. Wherever we passed he seemed to find friends, with whom he exchanged greetings. He never appeared in a hurry. He would quietly let the train start, and then, running after it, he would jump on the step of his carriage with an adroitness which denoted long habit, and so get in. At St

Quentin he delayed too long. I was watching him out of the carriage-window. It was only by running as fast as he could that he managed to get up to the last carriage. I saw him leap on to the step; I saw his feet touch it; his hand sought a hold and found none; he staggered and fell. . . . I heard a cry which was soon drowned in the shriek of the engine. The guard had noticed the accident and stopped the train. Some of the officials jumped on the line, and ran towards the spot where their comrade lay. When they reappeared they were carrying a corpse. The poor fellow had fallen head-foremost on the metals, and had fractured his skull. On the forehead there was a terrible wound.

"Could I still believe that all this was only the creation of a diseased brain? No. That was no longer possible, though my reason rebelled against the notion of admitting the supernatural as positive truth. Could it be chance that had shown me in imagination three living beings under the aspect that they were to wear in reality after death? No. Others might believe it, others might call my second-sight hallucination, and try to explain it by saying that my over-excited brain created images with such vague outlines, that I could fancy I had already seen certain things, which, in reality, I was perceiving for the first time. But I could not rest satisfied with such explanations. I was constrained to acknowledge, on the contrary, that—fearful and mysterious as it was—I possessed the baleful gift of recognising those who were fated to die young, and of even discerning in certain cases the peculiar marks foreshadowing their mode of death. Thus, I had seen Alexis and Sophie; thus, when he was seated beside me, I had seen the murderer Béchouard with up-

turned eyes—the eyes of a corpse ; and in like manner again, whenever I looked at Drieux, I saw the mark on his heart of a mortal wound.

“After my duel with our poor friend, I felt new life return. I had been possessed by the idea that I would kill him if ever I encountered him, sword in hand. We had met, we had fought, and he it was who had wounded me. I blessed him for it. I persuaded myself that since I had been mistaken once, that was a proof that my second-sight was not infallible. Why should I not be mistaken a hundred times ? Why not always ? That fatal gift, which I had fancied mine, was not real ; it was an offspring of my diseased imagination, —a fearful dream that time and experience were dispelling. Thus I argued, and felt relieved. I was eager for happiness ; life once more seemed so attractive ! I hoped to be able to enjoy it in peace. Yesterday, this morning—nay, a few hours ago, I hoped still. Now it is all over. . . . I know that Drieux has been murdered ; that he died as I had foreseen ; that I was not mistaken ; that I cannot, alas ! be mistaken. . . . And I know, with absolute certainty, that I too must die soon. I have nothing more to hope for in life. All is lost, irrevocably lost !”

As he said these last words, Stachowitch sank back in his chair, and, burying his face in his hands, burst into tears. In vain I sought to quiet him. At last, finding all argument useless, I called in his servant. The old man began to talk to him gently in Russian, and at last prevailed upon him to go to bed. I ran to the doctor, who was an old acquaintance of mine. I had some difficulty in gaining admittance to him at that late hour, but at my urgent entreaty he at

last consented to return with me to Stachowitch's bedside. This latter lay in a troubled sleep ; the doctor discovered all the symptoms of a violent fever, and after prescribing some remedies to be applied immediately, left us, promising to return early the next morning.

I passed the greater part of the night at my friend's bedside. At daybreak, feeling myself overcome by sleep, and seeing, moreover, that Stachowitch was sleeping calmly, I went home, after charging the Russian servant not to leave the room.

It was rather late when I woke the next morning. I dressed hurriedly and hastened to Stachowitch's house. The porter stopped me at the foot of the stairs.

“There is nobody up-stairs,” he said ; “the Count and his servant left this morning at seven.”

“What ! Gone ! Where are they gone ?”

“I cannot say. The Count passed before my *loge* without even looking at me ; the servant, who carried a small portmanteau, said, ‘We are going away for a few days.’ That's all I know ; not much, as you see ; but then, if every lodger——”

“I did not wait for more, but went at once to Stachowitch's sister. “Madame la Comtesse is not at home,” I was told. There was nothing left for me to do, but to go on to Madame de Baudy's. I was admitted at once, and before I could utter a word, she asked me in an agitated voice, “Have you come to explain what this means ?”

At the same time she handed me an open letter which contained only a few hurried lines :—

“I am obliged to forego the happiness of all my life. Do not accuse me ; I am innocent. Pity me ; I am unhappy. Comfort Marie.

“BORIS STACHOWITCH.”

What was the use of explanations? The only excuse I could offer for my poor friend was to confess that I thought him mad. That would have done him no good, nor would it have comforted Madame de Baudy or her niece. I did not care to cut off Stachowitch from all hope. Who could tell? Matters might be arranged perhaps. I merely said, therefore, that he had been seized with violent fever the day before, and had left Paris that same morning. I pointed out that his letter bore evident traces of great excitement, and that too much importance should not be attached to it. Finally, I entreated Madame de Baudy not to condemn her niece's future husband without hearing from him more fully. Having thus discharged my duty as a peace-maker, I took my leave to avoid further questioning or useless recrimination.

Time passed, and I heard nothing more of Boris Stachowitch. I called several times on the Countess de Villiers, and was invariably informed that she was not at home. I came at last to the conclusion that it was painful to her to speak of her brother's illness, and I ceased my visits; but as I felt a deep interest in the young Russian, I wrote to the Countess to ask news of him. She answered at once, but her letter told me nothing new.

"My brother is ill," she wrote, "and by the advice of his physicians he has gone to reside on one of my father's estates in Southern Russia. He seems to be progressing, if not rapidly at any rate uninterruptedly, towards recovery. It will give me great pleasure to communicate again with you, as soon as I have better news to tell. I hope it may be soon."

Years have gone by since then. Madame de Villiers has not "given herself the pleasure" of commu-

nicating with me. Probably she had no good news to write, and thought it needless to communicate bad tidings. I do not know what has been the fate of poor Stachowitch. Had he recovered, he would have written to me. If he is still alive, we may meet again in this "small world" of ours. Perhaps he is dead, and another of his strange forebodings has thus been realised.

Marie de Massieux did not die of grief after the disappearance of her affianced husband. She consoled herself, on the contrary, very quickly, and in my opinion she was quite right. To make up one's mind to an irreparable loss is a proof of courage as well as of good sense, and in all ages the advice to do so has been embodied in words of wisdom. As a rule, and for the majority of human beings, life in this world is a delusion—a long catalogue of unkept promises. Fortunate are those who, having secured a certain amount of happiness and ease, are wise enough to enjoy it without fears for the future or regrets for the past. Marie de Massieux must be numbered among these favoured few. She is married to an honest country gentleman, and her household seems prosperous. I met her, not long ago, in the Champs Elysées, where she was walking with two pretty little children. She looked smiling, proud, and satisfied. It seemed as if nothing could ruffle her placid happiness, and that at eighty she would wear the same expression of goodness and serenity that she had now. Our eyes met, but I saw by her look that she did not recognise me. Devoted to her present duties, she lives forgetful of the past, careless of the future. Hers is true wisdom. I deemed it needless to recall the remembrance of a painful period, and I passed on without even bowing to her.

OUTDOOR SONNETS.

A BACK-LYING FARM.

I.

A BACK-LYING farm but lately taken in ;
Forlorn hill-slopes and grey, without a tree ;
And at their base a waste of stony lea
Through which there creeps, too small to make a din,
Even where it slides over a rocky linn,
A stream, unvisited of bird or bee,
Its flowerless banks a bare sad sight to see.
All round, with ceaseless plaint, though spent and thin,
Like a lost child far-wandered from its home,
A querulous wind all day doth coldly roam.
Yet here, with sweet calm face, tending a cow,
Upon a rock a girl bareheaded sat
Singing unheard, while, with unlifted brow,
She twined the long wan grasses in her hat.

II.

So sat the maiden : to the outward eye
The flower-like genius of a flowerless waste
Dropt from the hand of Providence in haste,
And left neglected here to wane and die.
And yet, who knows what youthful fancies, ay,
What heavenly visitants, descending, graced
That lonely life, and with bright dreams displaced
The cloudy terrors of the natural sky ?

Heaven lies about us in our infancy,

And Heaven is not a thing of sight or sense ;
Here on this desolate flower-forsaken lea,
It opens to the eye of Innocence :
There is an Eden for us all, till we
Let in a devil who straightway drives us thence.

TENANTLESS.

A level waste, where sheep are starving drear,
And lapwings breed, and sapless windlestraws
Weakly submissive to the gusty flaws,
For ever round the waste forlornly veer ;
In midst whereof, most desolate, appear
Four grey walls round an empty house : you pause
As you pass by, and ask what fool he was
That built, and brought his household darlings *here* ?

No pathway through the waste leads to the door
That fronts the snow-cold hills ; the lake between,
When, as to-day, a north wind's blowing keen,
Sends to the very doorstep, cold and hoar,
Patches of flying foam :—a dreary scene !
Thank Heaven ! to be lived in by child no more !

ON GRANTON PIER.

Well, this is what I saw on Granton Pier :
In front, the Firth ! “ Oh, that is nothing new ” ?
Ay, but you never saw a bonnier blue
Than its glad waters wore. The day was clear,
And—you may laugh—to me they seemed to rear
Their waves in actual joy ! Now, *this* is true—
One of the waves took wings, became a mew,
And sunward rose upon a new career !

Across the Firth I saw the coast of Fife,
With here a cliff and there a nestling town ;
And here and there the hillsides showed the strife
Of April green contesting winter brown ;
And eastward far the horizon's edge was rife
With clean white sails that rose and sank adown.

THE LAND OF GILEAD.

FOR more than eighteen centuries Palestine has been a land of pilgrimage. The Jew, the Moslem, and the Christian alike have flocked to the shrines consecrated by the memories of a common faith. In our own days we see annually an ever-increasing influx of similar visitants. The Russian devotee, the European tourist, the Moslem hadji, and the Jewish pietist, come simultaneously from all quarters and fill the land at Easter-tide.

Throughout the early centuries of Christianity, and in the middle ages, from the twelfth century downwards, the same constant flow of pilgrimage went on, and the literature connected with the country is thus probably larger than that belonging to any other land. The mere enumeration of the names of standard works on Palestine has filled a stout quarto volume. The minute topography of the Bible, Josephus, and the Talmudists; the more vague accounts of the classical writers, Pliny, Strabo, Ptolemy, Solinus; the Onomasticon and Pilgrim Itineraries from the fourth century to the ninth, and the early ecclesiastical histories; the Chronicles of the Crusades, the Arab geographical writings, the curious colonisation scheme of Marino Sanuto, and the innumerable accounts of visitors from the fifteenth century onwards,—bring down an unbroken chain of descriptions from the time of Christ to the present day.

Within the last half-century our knowledge of the country has been materially improved by works of every kind, adapted for every species

of reader. The learned Robinson, the popular Thomson, the scornful Burton, the pious Vandevelde, the scientific explorers of the corps of Royal Engineers, and even the driest of American humorists, have in turn presented the country in its various aspects to the general public. Western Palestine has been vulgarised by the annual swarm of tourists who infest its main routes in spring, and although the country east of Jordan lies out of their way, and is less well known, it has nevertheless been visited by many competent explorers. Burckhardt, Seetzen, Freshfield, Newbold, have left accounts of the country; and the hills of Gilead have been explored by Canon Tristram, and surveyed by Colonel Warren. Dr Porter has become responsible for the very generally accepted fallacy, exposed later by the Duc du Vogüé, which recognises in the towns of the Ghassaniyeh Arabs, the "giant cities of Bashan;" and we are on the eve of seeing a great survey commenced by the Palestine Exploration Fund, which is to complete the one-inch map already extended over Western Palestine.

It may well seem at first sight impossible that another book on Palestine (even on Gilead) should contain anything startlingly new, or should be incapable of classification with one or other type of previous productions. Yet the work just issued by Mr Laurence Oliphant can only be compared with one other book on Palestine—the interesting work which the Venetian noble, Marino Sanuto, presented in 1321 A.D. to the Pope, and which

contains a complete scheme for the redemption of the Holy Land from oriental tyranny.

Mr Oliphant's name is already well known as the author of a scheme for the colonisation (or more correctly, the re-peopling) of part of Palestine. The idea may, perhaps, be received with distrust by some who pride themselves on practical cautiousness; but when we consider that it has been favourably regarded by statesmen like Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury, M. Waddington, and Midhat and Kheir ed Dîn Pashas; that it has received the support of the Jews, and that it has actually led to action being taken by some of their communities in the matter,—it is evident that we have to deal, not with the dream of an enthusiast, but with a singularly original idea advocated by a man of known ability and experience. The idea of a future for the Holy Land is one sure to find favour with a large class of our fellow-countrymen; and Mr Oliphant very shrewdly remarks, that the political value of the scheme being “once estimated on its own merits and admitted, the fact that it will carry with it the sympathy and support of those who are not usually particularly well versed in foreign politics is decidedly in its favour.”

Ideas which might be thought far more chimerical than that of the re-establishment of a Jewish fatherland, have of late found expression among diplomatists and military men, who are not likely to be accused of religious enthusiasm. The battle of Armageddon has been found by strategists to be a very possible contingency of the future struggle for power in the East, which men see to be impending between England and Russia; and it cannot be doubted that the goodwill of so powerful a peo-

ple as the Jews of our own times have become, will in the future be a consideration of great political importance.

The military and political value of Syria have been from time to time, since the signature of the Berlin Treaty, recommended to the notice of the readers of ‘Maga;’ and the same views are beginning to find expression among the more thoughtful representatives of the daily press. The future of European Turkey is a matter of common European interest; but England and Russia alone among European States are vitally concerned in the question of the future which is slowly developing in the Asiatic provinces of the Sultan's empire. It is on Armenia and Syria that the gaze of the British public will soon be intently fixed, and the necessity of defending our high-ways to India will be more and more apparent as the advance of Russia from the Caucasus becomes more formidable.

The views thus advocated find a powerful adherent in Mr Oliphant; and his forecast of the future is well worthy of consideration. Regretting, as all thinking men must regret, the predominance in the councils of the Sultan of the unworthy “ring” of corrupt self-seekers, who have succeeded in silencing the voice of the more patriotic and intelligent party in Turkey, he is obliged to confess that the hope of a revulsion of feeling at Constantinople is daily growing smaller, that the patience of England is exhausted, and that complications arising out of the altered relations between England and Turkey must be anticipated. Political events have so shaped themselves, that Palestine has become the pivot on which they must ultimately turn; “and the day is probably not far distant when the most important

interests of the British nation may be imperilled by the neglect to provide in time for the contingencies which are now looming in the immediate future."

Speaking of the policy of Russia, Mr Oliphant says:—

"Now, however, that her frontier has been extended in the direction of Armenia, she is as near the Mediterranean from her Asiatic outposts as she ever was from her European. It is no further from her lines beyond Kars to the Bay of Alexandretta, than it is from her frontier on the Danube to the Dardanelles, while Alexandretta is not half as far from Egypt as Constantinople. Instead of a Treaty of Berlin, and sundry more or less independent States intervening between the Asiatic-Russian frontier and Alexandretta, there is the Christian nationality of Armenia loudly calling for foreign interference—a Moslem race of Kurds in a state of more or less chronic insurrection, and aspiring to complete independence—and a mixed Christian and Moslem peasantry in a condition of extreme destitution and suppressed discontent. These all constitute invitations rather than obstacles to an advance in this direction. But the temptation to the Russian population to embark in a campaign in Asiatic Turkey would not be the prospect of a port on the Mediterranean, or the relief of an oppressed population, but the fascination of a religious war which should have for its object the conquest of the Holy Places at Jerusalem. Every year about four thousand Russian pilgrims, composed largely of discharged soldiers, make painful and laborious journeys to visit the sacred shrines. . . . Once in possession of Palestine, Russia is astride on two seas, for Akaba would certainly before long be included in her boundaries. The only way of resisting her advance on the Red Sea would be by a previous occupation of that port; but this would be attended with great difficulty and risk. With Russian arsenals at Haifa and Akaba, the route to India *viâ* Egypt would be practically closed, and her strategic position would be one that would give her political control of the East;

for with Asiatic Turkey thus dominated, the independence of Persia would virtually be at an end, and the Persian Gulf, no less than the Red Sea, would soon be open to her fleets. The rescue of Palestine from this fate, which otherwise appears inevitable, can only be accomplished by so strengthening and reforming the Turkish empire in Asia, that Russia would be deprived of any excuse for invading it, and would feel the task too hazardous to be undertaken lightly. In other words, such a degree of administrative autonomy must be granted to Armenia, Syria, and Palestine, as shall satisfy their local requirements and aspirations, and so secure their loyalty to the Sultan, and their cordial co-operation with the Ottoman troops against an invading army. If the Turkish Government refuses to see that the highest interests of the empire impose this duty upon it, a policy should, without delay, be adopted, which should anticipate the complications that must inevitably ere long be provoked by the enfeebled and disaffected condition of these provinces; and as the point at which such complications must ultimately culminate is Jerusalem, it is upon Palestine that this policy should, in the first instance, be directed. We owe the Crimean war to a dispute which arose out of the conflicting pretensions of European Powers to the Holy Places; and we shall have another war, of which the theatre will be in their immediate vicinity, unless we take steps to avert the danger by insuring to Palestine a degree of independence under the rule of the Sultan which should carry with it the sympathy and approbation, and therefore the indirect protection, of European Powers, and so prevent it from becoming the object of a Russian religious crusade. It would probably be found impossible to solve the Eastern problem in any other way; for the ecclesiastical jealousies involved in the possession of Jerusalem are so violent, and the mistrust of European Powers of each other is so profound, that no one of them would agree to the occupation of Palestine by another except by right of conquest; but none of them would object to the creation of a small province, enjoying certain privileges from the Turkish Govern-

ment, in which the burning questions of the 'Holy Places' would remain undisturbed, and where, from the conditions of their existence as a race, every country in Europe would probably be represented among its inhabitants."

The interests of England thus appear to demand the building up of barriers to oppose the advance of Russia on the Syrian coast of the Mediterranean. Such barriers are best formed by the constitution of strong, contented, and well-governed provinces; by the liberation of the Arab states from the crushing central tyranny; by the extension, under English and French protection, of the system which has given prosperity and peace to the Lebanon; and by the organisation of the Druse and Bedouin tribes as a *Landsturm* for the defence of Syria.

"If Armenia and Syria are to be preserved to the empire at all, it can only be by pursuing the policy which has succeeded so well in the case of our own colonies, of loosening the bonds that unite them to the central Government. It was in the hope that I should be able to illustrate this, on a small scale, to the authorities at Constantinople, that I proposed the colonisation of Eastern Palestine; and the fact that the political party then in power steadily resisted any measure, even of the most tentative description, tending to decentralisation, when privately suggested, only renders it the more incumbent upon the Governments chiefly interested in averting serious complications in Asia to take the matter in hand before it is too late. Apart from the clause in the Berlin Treaty especially affecting Armenia, the reasons which render it desirable that Armenia and Syria should be dealt with in the first instance, are to some extent identical. Both provinces contain a mixed Christian and Moslem population; in both, the popular discontent among Christians and Moslems alike, has reached an acute stage; both are chiefly inhabited by races not Turkish, and are

looking to foreign Powers for relief—Armenia to Russia, Syria to England, and both intervene between the Russian frontier and the Mediterranean. To prevent that political interference from without, which, in the European provinces of Turkey in a like condition, has produced, first, serious political complications, and finally, massacres, war, and violent disruption, the concession of a measure of local administrative autonomy to both becomes an imperative necessity—and this cannot be done in the case of Syria, without forcing upon our consideration the special necessities of Palestine, and the exceptional and prominent position that it has acquired politically under the new conditions which have been created by the late Russo-Turkish war, and the Treaty of Berlin."

In the acquisition of Cyprus as a base we have obtained the fulcrum whence our influence over Syria may be exerted; but the jealousies of other nations render it necessary that this influence should not be directly exercised; and Mr Oliphant shows, by a careful analysis, that the establishment of a strong Jewish community in their native land, is the means which appears practically to be best suited to the end in view—namely, the preservation of the just interests of England in a way which shall not be liable to misconstruction or misrepresentation by others. As loyal Moslem subjects, as a cosmopolitan but powerful nationality, as belonging to neither the Christian nor the Moslem faith, the Jews would be less obnoxious than any other race to the suspicions of either the Sultan or the European Powers; and if the various difficulties hereafter to be discussed can be removed, it seems clear that the restoration of the Jews to their ancient position as a ruling race, surrounded by a subject Semitic population, would present political advantages of very high order.

These views, which Mr Oliphant now adopts after careful study of the question both in Syria and at Constantinople, seem to show that the questions connected with Palestine are far more worthy of notice by English politicians than are aspirations of Greek or Montenegrin nationalities, to which their attention has of late been confined.

Led by a sound political instinct, Mr Oliphant proceeded in February 1879 to visit the scene of future British operations, and to examine on the spot the recommendations which he had received from his various friends and advisers. The recapitulation of these motives will serve to place his scheme of colonisation in a very different light from that in which it otherwise might be regarded, and to distinguish it from the vague projects of speculators and religious sentimentalists, of which there has always been a profusion, but especially so during the last three years. The period of his visit to Syria was one singularly fortunate for his purpose. The government of Lord Beaconsfield had recently succeeded in establishing Midhat Pasha as Waly of the country; and the energy of that honest and enlightened statesman made itself felt throughout the entire system of administration, and secured an unusual condition of safety and good government throughout the country. How far these good results have been lost through the removal of the Waly we have no present means of knowing, but the explorations of Mr Oliphant were materially facilitated by the then existing condition of Syria.

A careful examination of the system of government led Mr Oliphant to the same conclusions as those which have been reached by most of the unprejudiced writers

who have preceded him, and which formed the basis of those proposals for reformed administration which Lord Beaconsfield's Cabinet recommended to the Porte in 1878. He points out the great mistake of supposing the administrative system of Turkey to be hopeless, or that there are no able and enlightened Turks to work in the direction of reform; and the necessity of encouraging such men by impartial aid and sympathy. The fatal error of arraying the Christian against the Moslem, and of espousing only the cause of the first while leaving the far more valuable factor—the Moslem peasantry—to the unchecked tyranny of a corrupt beaurocracy, lies no doubt at the base of that hatred and suspicion which have of late grown up in the breasts of pious Moslems with regard to the Christian Powers of Europe, and at last even with respect to England itself. When undisturbed by foreign agitators, the Christian and the Moslem in the East live side by side in amity and peace. The Christians, indeed, protected by the foreign consul and assisted by their clergy, generally succeed in growing rich at the expense of the faithful; but the fatalistic indifference of the latter renders them callous to the loss of advantages which they less eagerly covet.

There is probably no existing faith so tolerant as is that of Islam. "Whosoever" says the Koran, "be he Jew, Christian, or Sabian, believes in God and in the Last Day, and does that which is right, shall receive his reward from God, and there shall be no fear for him, neither shall he mourn." Where among the fanatic sects of the Eastern Christian Churches may such broad catholicity of sentiment be found? Yet, until goaded by wrong and rendered desperate

by misery, the Moslem has ever been found to live in accordance with this tolerant creed. Mr Oliphant does well in advocating the cause of the Moslem *fellahin*, who, though neglected and oppressed, form the backbone of the Syrian population.

"It seems rather hard upon the Moslems, whether they be Arab, or Turk, or Slav, that the sympathies of the British public should be entirely withheld from them on the ground that they do not bear the name of Christian, even though they may be of the same race. As a rule the Moslem peasant is, in fact, far more worthy of their sympathy, for he is more oppressed, more honest, more orderly, and quite as industrious. It is true that there are exceptions to the rule—as, for instance, among the Circassians and Kurds; but they form a small proportion of the Mohammedan population of the empire. The religion of the former is of so vague a nature, that they can scarcely be called Moslem; and for the latter, who are a savage race of mountaineers, I claim no sympathy at all. It is for the poor down-trodden Moslem peasantry, devout according to their lights, whether Arab or Turk—than whom a race braver and more enduring in war, and more patient and well-conducted in time of peace, does not exist—that I would plead. In regard to the sentiments which both Moslems and Christians entertain towards their own Government there is very little difference. I do not see, therefore, why those in England who denounce the Turkish Government should make so great a distinction in their feelings towards those who share with them their dislike of the executive authority. If the result of their Christianity had been to make Christians in any way morally superior to Moslems, I could readily sympathise with the popular British sentiment upon the subject."

The main evils from which the lower class of agricultural peasantry in Syria (as in other parts of the Turkish empire) are now suffering are, according to Mr Oliphant, two in

number. The irregular cavalry, who have become notorious as *Bashibazouks*, act as a kind of police; but being ill paid, and quite undisciplined, they rob the Government on the one hand and oppress the peasantry on the other. The organisation of a proper police, similar to the *Turcopole* system of the crusading rulers, is thus one of the first reforms required to produce order and contentment. The tithe-farmers are the second, and even more cruel, scourge inflicted on the rural populations. The law which assesses the tithes at an arbitrary proportion irrespective of the character of the annual harvest, and which forbids the reaping of the field before the tithe has been collected, is one of the most crying evils of Turkish rule, and one which Lord Salisbury and our late ambassador at the Porte were most anxious to amend. To these evils we may, perhaps, add a third not mentioned by Mr Oliphant—namely, the venality of the native justices, who are ever ready to decide in favour of the richest. The corruption, which is the curse of the Turanian races, whether Russian or Turkish, has sapped the very foundations of the State. The law of the Koran, if justly administered, might, as in the old days of Arab civilisation, yet be sufficient for oriental races; but the Ulema, who buys his judgeship at Constantinople, and recoups himself from the pockets of the poor, is one of a noxious tribe which must be exterminated before prosperity can return to the State.

In dealing with the question of reform in Turkey, European statesmen have, however, as Mr Oliphant points out, fallen into a radical error in dividing the forces at work into the Christian and Moslem elements. The truth is that the Government of the Porte forms a

third element distinct from either of the two other interests; and while the philo-Christian party among European politicians classes the Moslem population with the administration which oppresses it, the pro-Turkish party fall into an equally unfortunate error in sup-reporting, not the native Moslem races, but the corrupt Constantinople Government. "As things are," says our author, "it would be no solution of the problem to eject the governing class from Europe, for the misgoverned Moslem and Christian would still remain side by side in Asia," and it is in Asia especially that the question of misgovernment really affects the interests of England.

A curious example of the feasibility of repopulating Palestine is now to be seen in the country east of Jordan, and Mr Oliphant is the first traveller who has described these settlements of exiled Circassians which the Turkish Government has established at Kuneitereh, south of Mount Hermon, and at Ammon, the capital of the ancient region of the children of Ammon.

Of the former colony he speaks thus:—

"About 300 Circassians were busily engaged in the first stage of building a village for themselves. They had chosen a site which had evidently been that of a town at some former time, for large square blocks of stone were abundant. Those who had not succeeded in getting a roof over their heads were temporarily sheltered by roughly improvised tents, and all were hard at work making a new home for themselves. They were a fraction of a large importation from Bulgaria, now at Kuneitereh, and most of them came from the neighbourhood of Widdin. In fact, it is not improbable that many of them took some share in the 'atrocities.' They were quite amiable so far as we were concerned, but were too busy to bestow very much attention upon us, and their residence

in Bulgaria had accustomed them to the sight of specimens of Western civilisation, so that we were no novelty. The women and children were hoeing and weeding in the newly-made gardens. The men were either hauling stone in creaking *arabas* drawn by bullocks—a sight which must have been altogether new to the neighbouring Bedouins, who had never seen a wheeled vehicle in their lives—or were building the walls of their houses. They were under the management of a chief, who was too busily engaged in a discussion with an Arab to honour us with much of his notice; so we sat under a half-built wall to discuss our luncheon, and look on at this interesting experiment in colonisation."

Such were the principal lessons which Mr Oliphant tells us he learnt from a visit to Syria. His book is not, however, entirely devoted to political matters, or to the account of his proposed colony. It contains picturesque accounts of his wanderings, interesting archæological and ethnical notices, and descriptions of varied scenery. It is enlivened by gleams of quiet humour, and it is throughout written in an attractive and natural style. To those who have waded through the affectations of writers whose mission appears to have been to confound the Anthropological Society, or to demolish the Royal Geographical, who have picked their way through pages thickly scattered with Arabic and Hebrew, and embellished with terms borrowed from half-a-dozen European languages, it is refreshing to read the simple yet eloquent phrases of a cultivated writer whose object it is to make a friend rather than a slave of his reader.

Following the coast-road from Beyrout to Tyre, and thence crossing the mountains to Banias, the traveller proceeded through the middle of Bashan to Mount Gilead, where, after taking counsel with

others, he was induced finally to fix the site of his proposed colony. Descending to the ruins of Gadara, S.E. of the Sea of Galilee, he proceeded to Ajlun, Jerash, and Salt, and thence eastwards to the fort of Zerka on the Hadj road. Returning to Salt, he passed over Jordan, and reached Jerusalem by way of Jericho. Resting for a while in the Holy City at Easter-time, he returned north by Nablous, visited Haifa and Nazareth, and thence travelled along the coast to Beyrout. Crossing the Lebanon by an unusual route, he remained some time in Damascus, where he elaborated his scheme with the assistance of Midhat Pasha, and whence he made various excursions to Baalbec, Malula, and other places of interest. From Damascus he returned through Zahleh, and visited the famous site of the Temple of Venus at Aika, whence his route lay along the shore, and terminated finally at Beyrout.

We must leave the reader to study in the original the interesting account of these wanderings in the Syrian mountains. He will find much to amuse and to instruct him in the mass of information which Mr Oliphant has collected. The graphic account of a night of misery at Banias, the picturesque sketch of the scenery round Ajlun, the beautiful women of Gilead, the contemplated attack on the traveller at Ajlun, the frustrated sheikh of Sûf, and the wicked guide of Arak el Emir—all these incidents, related with freshness and humour, will interest the general reader more than most writers on Palestine succeed in doing.

The episode of the sheikh of Sûf is worthy of quotation, as exemplifying the more popular aspect of the book, being but one out of many amusing incidents in Mr Oliphant's travels:—

"The testimonials which the sheikh triumphantly produced consisted largely of complaints against this robbery. When, with an apparent feeling of gratified vanity, he handed us a testimonial calling him an 'extortionate old thief,' and warning travellers to beware of him; and insisted upon our reading it carefully and then returning to him, to be stowed away for future use, and then expected us to comply with his demand for money, he seemed quite astonished at our attitude of resistance.

"'Why should we pay you five pounds?' we asked.

"'It is the custom,' he replied; 'no traveller has been allowed to visit the ruins without paying me.'

"'Then it is a bad custom, which must be immediately discontinued,' we said. 'We decline absolutely to pay a farthing.'

"'But no one has ever before declined.'

"'Then it is high time for some one to set the example,' we remarked, and we called in the zaptiehs, who for the first time proved of some use. They, anxious to prove their zeal and importance, and knowing that they ran no risk, as the Caimakam and his soldiers were within call, poured upon the head of the sheikh a torrent of invective—telling him that they were a far better protection than any escort he could furnish, and that there was plenty more protection at Ajlun, about which, if he had any doubt, he had better send and ask his brother, who was in a position to give him all the necessary information—with many other sarcastic remarks of a like nature, which made all the surrounding Arabs, who had begun to look truculent, change countenance considerably. Nevertheless he went on murmuring and protesting, and offering us more testimonials, which we read out of curiosity, until we had finished our meal and our cigarettes, when we quietly mounted and rode away, leaving the sheikh, and the savage-looking group of Arabs by whom he was surrounded, staring open-mouthed at our audacity, but utterly impotent and paralysed by the new turn matters had taken, thanks to an energetic Caimakam."

Not less humorous is the account

of the travellers sufferings at Kefr Assad :—

"Altogether, though our accommodation at Kefr Assad was somewhat squalid in its character, we were disposed, after dinner, to take a contented view of life ; and after barricading our door and spreading our blankets on the floor, looked forward with some satisfaction to a well-earned night's rest—a delusion which, unhappily, was soon dispelled ; for no sooner had the sounds of the day died away, and the family and our servants gone to roost, than a pack of jackals set up that plaintive and mournful wail by which they seem to announce to the world that they are in a starving condition. They came so close to the village that all the dogs in it set up a furious chorus of defiant barking. This woke the baby, of whose vocal powers we had been till then unaware. Fleas and mosquitoes innumerable seemed to take advantage of the disturbed state of things generally to make a combined onslaught. Vainly did I thrust my hands into my socks, tie handkerchiefs round my face and neck, and so arrange the rest of my night-attire as to leave no opening by which they could crawl in. Our neck and wrists especially seemed circled with rings of fire. Anything like the numbers and voracity of the fleas of that 'happy village' I have never, during a long and varied intimacy with the insect, experienced.

"It would have been useless to go and try sleeping on a raised stage outside. In the first place, the dogs were lying in wait for the calves of our legs in its immediate vicinity ; and in the second, the fleas were doubtless as numerous there as inside. If the baby was only suffering a tithe of what we were, no wonder it squalled. It was easy enough to catch them by the dozen ; but it was of no manner of use—it in no way diminished the supply. So we groaned and tossed without closing an eye, eagerly watching for the morning, and an hour before daylight roused the establishment."

The accounts of a visit to the Druse chieftains of Beteddin, and

of the subsequent wanderings round Damascus, first appeared in our pages, and will be familiar to the readers of 'Maga.' Mr Oliphant points out how valuable a recruiting-ground England may find among the brave and loyal Druse population, which now numbers between 70,000 and 80,000 souls. He gives a sharply satirical sketch of the blessings of civilisation as affecting the Baghdad postman of the future, "flying across the desert by the Euphrates Valley Railway, tightly wedged between a set of card-sharpers in a third-class carriage." At Damascus he witnessed some of those extraordinary performances which Moslems attribute to supernatural agencies—the eating of scorpions and snakes, walking on live coals, and harmless wounding with sharp swords, which constitute the claims of the Bedouin order of dervishes to a reputation for peculiar sanctity.

A most striking innovation was also to be seen in the venerable capital of Syria at the time of Mr Oliphant's visit. The opera had been introduced by Midhat Pasha with considerable success, including a ballet of a very tame and decorous character. The account of a visit to the curious town of Malula where Syriac is still spoken, and where the ritual of the Jacobites is still partly preserved, is extremely interesting and graphic ; and the description of life among the rich Maronites of Lebanon, contrasting with the miseries of the Moslem peasantry in the south, shows how much might be done by Western Governments, if endowed with powers of protection, to further the material prosperity of the country under native Moslem rulers.

The objects which Mr Oliphant had mainly in view had no connection with archæological questions. His time was occupied in learning

all that he could of the state of the country, and the peculiarities of its inhabitants. He was moreover not a Hebrew scholar, which is an almost indispensable qualification for the explorer of Syrian antiquities. Nevertheless, there are many interesting antiquarian notes scattered through the book. The author visited Dêr Eyub, a shrine which has been venerated from an early period as the site of Job's residence in the Land of Uz. St Chrysostom tells us of the pilgrims who used to visit the dung-hill at this spot, and it is generally acknowledged that the district of Bashan has the best claim to be considered the native country of Job. Another interesting site was that of the *Cavea Roob*, which Mr Oliphant identifies with the Mu'allakat Rahûb in the ravine of the same name; and the description given of the great subterranean galleries of Beit-Ras is equally valuable, for though throughout Syria the peasantry are semi-troglodytic in their habits, it appears that east of Jordan the excavations are far more extensive and important than any which are found west of the river. The Dolmens of Mezar are also interesting to the archæologist, as very few of these monuments are as yet known in Syria, and Mr Oliphant indicates the names of various hitherto unknown sites which it is hoped may hereafter be explored.

As regards Biblical antiquities, Mr Oliphant does good service in demolishing the flimsy arguments whereby the site of Ramoth-Mizpeh and Ramoth-Gilead have been located at and near Salt; but he is apparently not aware that the former has recently been identified with the present Remtheh west of Bosrah, in a situation which agrees with his own views, and with the indications to be found in the Old

Testament and in the first book of Maccabees. The identification of Jogbehah with Judeideh is also of value, as elucidating the topography of Gideon's pursuit of the Midianites, which is still very imperfectly understood. The ethnological passages of the book, including accounts of the Metawalies, the Ansariyeh, the Druses, and some of the Arab tribes, will also be of interest to the general reader: the description of the religious tenets of these mysterious sects is founded on good authority, and although there is perhaps little that is new to the student of these abstruse subjects, it is not often that a popular account of them has been placed before the public. Syria has truly been the mother of innumerable creeds, and within its narrow limits it still embraces the professors of at least sixteen forms of faith. In the early ages of Islam innumerable mystic sects sprang up, and of these the Sabians, the Metawalies, the Ansariyeh, the Ismailians, and the Druses, are the modern representatives.

The elements out of which these secret creeds were formed were of a high antiquity. The doctrines of the Persian faith, including the antagonism of the good and evil principles, were learned by the Jewish Mehistanite heretics, who took them finally to Egypt. In the Alexandrine school arose the philosophy which Plato is said by Cicero to have adopted from the Egyptian priests, and which finds expression in the writings of Philo. The spiritual interpretation of Scripture, and the mystic theology of the Cabbala, were the productions of this school. At a later period the facts of Christianity were subjected to the same process of esoteric explanation, and the fifty sects of Gnostics spread their heresies throughout the Levant.

Still later the history of the faith of Islam underwent the same treatment, and the Taweel, or "interpretation" of the Koran, was developed.

In addition to these mystic elements the ancient astronomical and Phallic worship of a yet earlier period survived in Syria, and was mixed with the foreign doctrines of Persia and Egypt. The Aryan ideas of successive incarnations of the Deity and of metempsychosis which we find embodied in Buddhism and the faiths of India also found their way to the west, and out of this extraordinary confusion of creeds—Jewish, Christian, and Moslem; Zoroastrian, Buddhist, and Platonic; Gnostic and Pagan—the various dogmas of the modern heretical Moslem sects have been successively developed.

Of all these sects, including the Carmathians, the Motazales, the Sabians, and others which sprang up in the eighth and ninth centuries of our era, four only now survive in Syria—the Metawalies, the Ansariyeh, the Ismailians, and the Druses.

The Metawalies, who take their name from the Taweel, or esoteric interpretation of the Koran, are the only representatives in Syria of the Shiite sect of Moslems, whose home is in Persia, and who differ from the Sunnis or Western Moslems on the question of the true succession of the Prophet, holding the view that Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed, was not only the true successor, but, moreover, an inspired person, or even an incarnation of the Deity, and first of the Imaumat, of whom the twelfth—a Moslem Messiah—is shortly expected as a final manifestation of the same mysterious divinity. About 80,000 of this sect exist in Syria, and Mr Oliphant records many of their more curious customs, such as that of carrying a

piece of sacred earth constantly about, on which the head of the believer rests when prostrate in prayer; and also that of divesting themselves of all gold ornaments before praying, in which we seem to see an echo of the same spirit which actuated the Ebionite Christians. The Metawalies also have curious marriage customs—the "Engagement of interdiction," which is but an Oriental form of our English custom of engagement; and the marriage of privilege, which is a union for a stated period—a month or a year, for instance—which ceases at the expiration of the agreed time, unless renewed in a permanent form. The lady is generally a widow in such cases.

The Ismailians, who take their name from Ismail, the sixth Imaum, who died in 765 A.D., inhabit the mountains between Homs and Latakia, and are chiefly known as the modern representatives of the mediæval Hashishin, or "hemp-smokers," the followers of the Old Man of the Mountain, who were never conquered by the Franks, and from whose deeds of violence the name Assassin has obtained its modern significance.

The Ansariyeh (or, more correctly, Nusariyeh) are a sect whose home is yet further north among the mountains of Antioch, and who in doctrine closely resemble the Ismailians. They are said to take their name from Nusair, son of one of the slaves of Ali the son of Abou Taleb, who came from the village Nazaria, near Euphratès, in 891 A.D. and who began to teach the rustic population of the Syrian mountains. There is probably some confusion between the name of the founder and that of Nazara or "Nazarene," by which Christians are known in the East, for the affinity of the Ansariyeh to some of the early Gnostic sects is so strong that

several writers have attempted to identify them with the Manicheans, whose doctrine of the transmigration of wicked human souls into the bodies of brutes the Ansariyeh still hold.

According to Nusair, Christ the Messiah, the Word, and the Guide, was identical with Ahmed, a descendant of Ali, and also with the angel Gabriel. Thus the dogma of successive incarnations forms part of the Ansariyeh creed, as does the belief in a Trinity composed of Ali, Mohammed, and Suleiman. Still more curious is the preservation among them of a sacramental rite, evidently of Christian derivation; and with these doctrines of Jewish, Moslem, or Christian origin, is mingled the worship of the ancient Canaanite tribes, which was probably the original cultus of the peasants whom Nusair converted. Thus the Ansariyeh are divided into four clans, who worship respectively the sun, the dawn, the air, and the host of heaven. Mr Oliphant touches lightly on a yet more repulsive feature of the creed, derived certainly from the ancient worship of Baal Peor, and recalling the tenets of the wildest sects of Gnostic Christianity and the calumnies which were disseminated at an early period among pagans with respect to Christians generally. These rites, though performed in darkness and secrecy, are commonly known to, and described by, the other natives of the surrounding country; and there can be little doubt that the nature-worship of the Canaanite tribes thus survives among the mountaineers of northern Syria.

The Ansariyeh will be familiar to the readers of 'Tancred,' but the portrait there sketched of them is idealised considerably, for it is the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth, of Peor and Asherah, which survives

among them, rather than the æsthetic cultus of the great gods of Greece. The Druses claim to be the original sect from which the Ansariyeh have split off; but as the latter first appeared in the ninth century, and as Hakim, the Druse demigod, only began to reign a century later, and as, moreover, the Nusariyeh cultus includes elements foreign to, and more ancient than, those which compose the Druse creed, it is probable that this view of the relation of the sects is untrustworthy. Mr Oliphant gives an interesting explanation of the existence of an isolated settlement of the Ansariyeh near Banias, far south of their native mountains. In the year 1128 A.D., the castle and town of Banias fell into the hands of the Assassins, who entered into a treaty with Rainier de Brus. According to the tradition of the modern Nusariyeh inhabitants of Ain Fit, south-east of Banias, the district has been in their possession for eight centuries, and it is thus probable that the present settlement is a survival of the Assassin colony of the Crusading period.

The religion of the Druses, so far as it is contained in their sacred writings, has become known to students through the discovery of their holy books at Hasbeya, whence they were removed by the Egyptians in 1838; while in 1842, and again at the time of the Damascus massacres in 1860, other Druse writings fell into the hands of their enemies. It is probable, however, that the language of these Scriptures is to be understood as symbolical, and as concealing an inner teaching of spiritual pantheism only known to the Uwhahid or "Unitarians," the highest grade of the initiated.

The founder of the Druse sect was Hakim bi Amr Illah, the mad Fatimite Khalif of Egypt; and the

most distinctive article of their creed is the deification of Hakim, as the latest and most glorious manifestation of the mysterious Imaum. Hakim died in 1020 A.D., or, according to his disciples, was withdrawn from human sight; but his pretensions were supported by the Persian emigrant, El Durzi, from whom the Druses are named, and by Hanyza-ibn-Ali, the author of their sacred books. El Durzi was driven from Egypt to Hasbeya on Hermon, and spread his doctrines among the surrounding villages.

The Druse cosmogony is derived from the Zoroastrian and the Egyptian systems; it includes the Creation of the Evil "Antagonist" by the Deity—recalling the Persian Ormuzd and Ahriman—and the mystical Trinity of Mind, Soul, and Word, derived, no doubt, from the older Cabbalistic Triad of Wisdom, Word, and World - Soul. Their doctrines respecting Christ approach those of the Docetes in regarding Him as a human being, inspired by a Divine Spirit, which deserted Him before the Crucifixion; while their views as to the advent of a Messiah, and respecting the end of the world, are borrowed—as indeed is the eschatology of the Koran itself—from the Jewish system, which is so fully developed in the Sibylline books, and in the Apocalyptic literature of the century preceding the Christian era.

The most curious feature of this curious creed is, however, its connection with Buddhism, and with China as a Holy Land. The soul of Hakim is supposed to have been translated to the Celestial Empire, and the western Chinese cities are believed to be populated by the souls of all the pious Druses who have followed their Imaum. From China, Hakim will advance with the Messiah, and the apostles—

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Hamza—in the hour of final triumph; and in the *khalwats* or synagogues, which are found on the mountain-sides in Lebanon and Hermon, the initiated Druses join in epic chants, which celebrate the future victory of the Chinese army of Hakim. The sacred books of Buddha were translated into Arabic at Balkh, in the sixth century; and it was no doubt from Persia that the Druses received their Buddhist doctrines, as well as those traceable to the Zoroastrian Zend-Avesta.

The dogma of successive incarnations of the Deity—of whom the Druses recognise 10 greater and 69 minor manifestations—is intimately connected with their doctrine of transmigration. With regard to the latter, Mr Oliphant gives an anecdote, which is worthy of quotation, as illustrating the character of the Druse ideas of metempsychosis.

"A child, five years old, in Djebel el A'ala, complained of the life of poverty which his parents led, and alleged that he had been a rich man in Damascus; that on his death he was born in another place, but lived only six months; that he was born again among his present friends, and desired to be carried to that city. He was taken there by his relatives, and on the way astonished them by his correct knowledge of the names of the different places which they passed. On reaching the city, he led the way through the various streets to a house which he said had been his own. He knocked, and called the woman of the house by her name; and on being admitted, told her that he had been her husband, and asked after the welfare of the several children, relatives, and acquaintances whom he had left. The Druses of the place soon met to inquire into the truth of the matter. The child gave them a full account of his past life among them, of the names of his acquaintances, the property which he had possessed, and the debts which he had left. All was found to be strictly true, except a

small sum which he said a certain weaver owed him. The man was called, and on the claim being mentioned to him he acknowledged it, pleading his poverty for not having paid it to the children of the deceased. The child then asked the woman who had been his wife whether she had found a sum of money which he had hid in the cellar; and on her replying in the negative, he went directly to the place, dug up the treasure, and counted it before them. The money was found to be exactly of the amount and kind of specie which he had specified. His wife and children, who had been considerably older than himself, then gave him some money, and he returned with his new friends to his mountain home."

But we must now turn our attention from these curious illustrations of Oriental mysticism to the more practical but not less interesting question of the proposed colony in Gilead.

"It is somewhat unfortunate," says Mr Oliphant, "that so important a political and strategical question as the future of Palestine should be inseparably connected in the public mind with a favourite religious theory. The restoration of the Jews to Palestine has been so often urged upon sentimental or Scriptural grounds, that now, when it may possibly become the practical and common-sense solution of a great future difficulty, a prejudice against it exists in the minds of those who have always regarded it as a theological chimera, which it is not easy to remove."

In the preceding pages we have seen that the original idea of Mr Oliphant's scheme was purely political, and that the popular religious theory had no connection with the project. The word "colonisation" has, nevertheless, so nearly become a byword in connection with Palestine, that it might be worthy of consideration whether it should not be avoided altogether, and the expression, "Model Province," "Jew-

ish Land Company," or some similar term, employed instead—so powerful on the general public is the influence of a familiar word.

There have been many colonies at various times in Palestine—Jewish, German, and American. Scotch colonies have been proposed, but none of these schemes have been very successful, partly through want of capital, but perhaps chiefly through the action of the Turkish administration, coupled with the effects of climate on the colonists. Although the Turkish Law theoretically encourages foreigners to settle in the Sultan's dominions, the exactions of subordinate officials, and the fatal *backsheesh* system, have hitherto proved the ruin of all such enterprises; and the climate of Syria is such that it is impossible for a European to compete with the native peasant, accustomed as he is to its heat and dryness, and requiring far less animal food for his support. The same fate which overtook the crusading colonists in the second or third generation awaits the enfeebled progeny of modern European immigrants of the agricultural class, removed from the bracing influence of northern climes.

Mr Oliphant's scheme would obviate both these main difficulties. In the first place, it is evident that the administration of the Colony would be left in the hands of the settlers; for though he has not thought well to publish the details of the charter of the proposed Company carefully drawn up by Turkish lawyers at Constantinople, yet we gather from his book that he attaches due importance to the repression of the two great enemies of the agriculturist in Syria—the tax-gatherer and the lawless soldier. In the second place, his scheme would differ from all other colonisation projects, inasmuch as its main

characteristic would be the employment, under educated supervision, of the Syrian peasantry, instead of the fruitless and unjust attempt to supersede the indigenous population by an influx of European immigrants.

With regard to the district chosen for the site of the Colony—roughly corresponding to the ancient Peræ—all authorities are agreed that it far surpasses in fertility and in salubrity the stony mountains and malarious plains of Western Palestine. Mount Gilead is a region of rich red soil, with springs and perennial streams, with oak forests and pistachio copses, with ruined cities of magnificent architecture attesting the existence of a former period of prosperity in Roman times, and of a once civilised and flourishing state. Now, however, that the great Roman roads have been allowed to fall into ruins, the difficulty of communication has almost isolated this rich region; and the encroachments of the Bedouin tribes—the modern representatives of the ancient Nabathians, and the still older Beni Kedem or “Sons of the East,” whose home is in the Syrian desert—have so discouraged the peaceful and unprotected settled population, that the land has become—as its modern name indeed signifies—empty.

The land tenure in Syria is of a peculiar character, and the *Miri* or Crown Lands, held by the village communities on payment of taxes, lapse to the Crown when not cultivated, and are thus in the gift of the Government without infringement of any private rights. By the Ottoman Colonisation Law, foreigners are entitled to take up and cultivate any amount of unoccupied land, without purchase, on condition of becoming Turkish subjects.

As regards the fitness of the country in question for cultivation, Mr Oliphant speaks thus:—

“The valley of the Jordan would act as an enormous hothouse for the new colony. Here might be cultivated palms, cotton, indigo, sugar, rice, sorghum, besides bananas, pine-apples, yams, sweet potatoes, and other field and garden produce. Rising a little higher, the country is adapted to tobacco, maize, castor-oil, millet, flax, sesamum, melons, gourds, cumin, coriander, anise, ochra, brinjals, pomegranates, oranges, figs,—and so up to the plains, where wheat, barley, beans and lentils of various sorts, with olives and vines, would form the staple products. Gilead especially is essentially a country of wine and oil; it is also admirably adapted to silk-culture; while among its forests, carob or locust-bean, pistachio, jujube, almond, balsam, kali, and other profitable trees grow wild in great profusion. All the fruits of Southern Europe, such as apricots, peaches, and plums, here grow to perfection; apples, pears, quinces, thrive well on the more extreme elevation, upon which the fruits and vegetables of England might be cultivated,—while the quick-growing Eucalyptus could be planted with advantage on the fertile but treeless plains. Not only does the extraordinary variety of soil and climate thus compressed into a small area offer exceptional advantages from an agricultural point of view, but the inclusion of the Dead Sea within its limits would furnish a vast source of wealth, by the *exploitation* of its chemical and mineral deposits. The supply of chlorate of potassium, 200,000 tons of which are annually consumed in England, is practically inexhaustible; while petroleum, bitumen, and other lignites can be procured in great quantities upon its shores. There can be little doubt, in fact, that the Dead Sea is a mine of unexplored wealth, which only needs the application of capital and enterprise to make it a most lucrative property.”

The principles of administration for the colony would form the first important consideration. The taxes

should be collected by the officials of the company; the police should be formed from among the colonists; the choice of judges and other officers, the arrangement of the village *mejlisses*, the enforcement of forest laws—all these, and other details of government, should be so controlled by the directors of the company, that it should be impossible for the corrupt practices of Turkish rule to find their way into the colony. As regards the labour problem, there can be little doubt that a sufficiency of native labour could be obtained. The fame of the model province would spread with the rapidity characteristic of the East. The idea of an earthly paradise where the taxes were justly levied, where the Bashi-bazouk ceased from troubling, where money could be borrowed at a less usurious rate of interest, where oppression was checked by European interest, and where a man might grow rich without danger to himself, would inevitably attract the energetic but desperate peasantry of other districts. The population of Syria is actually reduced by misery to a total less than that of the inhabitants of London alone; but Mr Oliphant quotes many authorities who attest the energy, intelligence, endurance, temperance, and docility of the Moslem *fellahin*—qualities which, under a just administration and a civilised supervision, would naturally produce prosperity and contentment, and result in a rapid increase of the native population.

The *fellahin*, in Syria as in Egypt, are literally eaten up with usury. The establishment of a bank in connection with the land company, authorised to lend money on mortgage at a reasonable rate, would be the greatest possible boon to peasants, who can now only borrow the money required for

payment of taxes at 40 or 50 per cent, while, at the same time, the administration of the colony would thus obtain a hold over their own peasantry, and a gradually increasing influence over the surrounding districts. Two other sources are indicated by Mr Oliphant whence immigrants might be gathered. The Moslem refugees of Bulgaria, already accustomed to agriculture in a somewhat similar country, might with advantage be received, as the Circassians have already been, into the limits of the colony; while Jewish agriculturists from Roumania and Russia might be encouraged to emigrate. It was not, however, as tillers of the soil, but as landowners and proprietors, that Mr Oliphant would wish to reinstate the Hebrews in their ancient patrimony—a position which was no doubt that held by the Jews from the time when they made “hewers of wood and drawers of water” of the Gibeonite aborigines. In such a position Jewish capitalists have already succeeded, in spite of adverse circumstances, in making an agricultural occupation profitable; but although the Jews of Hillah, of Morocco, and of Poland, are to a certain extent employed in agriculture, it cannot be denied that the genius of the nation is adverse to manual labour—a characteristic freely admitted by the Jews themselves.

In thus assigning to the Jews their true position as capitalists, bankers, and landowners, Mr Oliphant avoids one of the great stumbling-blocks of former schemes. Another objection which has proved yet more difficult has arisen from the suspicions not unnaturally excited among the Jews by the zeal of Christian philanthropists. The Hebrews are proudly conscious that, should it seem good to themselves

as a nation to encourage a re-peopling of the Holy Land, they are fully able to find all the money, the men, the influence, and the ability required, among themselves; and they shrewdly suspect that the ultimate object of their Christian friends is the conversion of their race to the Christian faith. This difficulty has, however, apparently not arisen in the case of Mr Oliphant. His scheme has been warmly received by the ancient people, has been advocated by their leading journals, and approved by many influential members of their community. His name has been mentioned in prayer in the synagogues of Roumania, and his advice is being actually carried into execution, on a small scale, by a Jewish colony in process of formation.

Another difficulty which may be worthy of careful consideration is the present appropriation, by the wandering Arabs, of the uncultivated lands which it is proposed to colonise. The Bedouin range over districts having boundaries recognised by the various tribes, and their tribe-marks will be found cut on the crumbling walls of ruined towns as marks of ownership of the wealth supposed to be hidden beneath the mounds of rubbish. That they have no real right to the cultivable lands is clear enough, but they will not the less be unwilling to retreat to the oases of the Eastern Desert, where other tribes would dispute their claims. A cordon of soldiers in detached forts along the borders of the redeemed districts would no doubt, if well armed and officered, be able to keep the Arabs at bay, but the proposal to assign to the more sedentary tribes "reserves" on the borders of the colony, where they might be encouraged to become settled as pastoral clans or as

agriculturists, would no doubt be a better policy, tending in time to civilise and conciliate the tribes beyond the borders of the model province. Security from the hostile raids or *ghaza* of distant tribes would be one of the first requisites for the prosperity of the district, which has been actually reduced to its present condition by the absence of such security; but on the other hand we must not forget the innate cautiousness of the nomad tribes, who rarely attack a strong community, nor the tendency which many clans of Arabs have shown to settle and to become cultivators of lands adjacent to those occupied by the *fellahin*.

Having thus shown briefly the practicable nature of the scheme, and the remedies for the various difficulties to be apprehended, we may, in conclusion, turn for a moment to the question of communication with the outer world—the railway system connecting the colony with the Mediterranean, with Egypt, and with the north.

The direction of the commercial and strategical lines of a country is controlled by its physical features. The soldier and the merchant from the dawn of history have found their way along river-valleys and low-lying plateaux; and although modern science finds no difficulty in bridging chasms, or boring mountains, yet so expensive is the process of defacing these great physical obstacles, that the cheapest and generally the best routes of an undeveloped country will be found to coincide with the historic highroads of ancient times. The scheme of a railway which, starting at the artificial port of Tripoli, should cross Lebanon and wander from Euphrates to Tigris, is condemned by the fact that it bears no relation to the lie of the land. The natural Tigris route is that of the

Anabasis, with its port at Trebizonde—the old trade route of the Pisans—while the road from India to the Mediterranean will yet lie, as of old, through Antioch and Seleucia.

It has already been pointed out in the pages of 'Maga' that Syria possesses only two strategic harbours—Seleucia, at the mouth of Orontes, in the north; and Haifa, at the mouth of the Kishon, in the south. From these two ports alone is there an easy communication with the interior; and the key to the railway system of Syria is found in the recognition of the true gateways leading to the west. Mr Oliphant has fully recognised the importance of Haifa as the port through which his proposed colony would trade with Europe; and the general idea of the railway system springs naturally from this basis, although some of the details may be open to further discussion. There is no engineering difficulty in connecting Damascus with Haifa, along the old route which the Egyptians and Assyrians were wont to follow. A branch down the Jordan Valley to the Dead Sea would be useful to the colony; and a line connecting this system with Egypt (perhaps through the Sharon plain) would in time be added; while Jerusalem would finally be reached by following the western watershed. On the north, the Syrian line from Damascus would follow the course of the Orontes to join the Euphrates Valley Railway, when constructed (according to Mr Andrew's proposal), through Aleppo. On the south, another line, following the present Hadj route, would communicate with the Gulf of Akaba.

One of the most striking suggestions in Mr Oliphant's book is that of the abolition of the Hadj, or pilgrimage from Damascus to Mecca, which annually costs the

Turkish Empire a sum of £80,000. So ancient is this institution, and so intimately is it connected with the most important doctrines of Islam, that it might well be thought too vital a feature of Moslem society to admit of its abolition, were it not that the Turkish Government has actually determined (no doubt through inability to provide the expenses) to discontinue the Hadj from Damascus, thus severing the last line which connects Mecca with Stamboul. This change, while materially increasing the prospect of security in the region east of Jordan—through the cessation of the annual subsidy of nearly £100,000 which used to be paid as black mail to the Bedouin, whose lawless deeds were condoned through fear of their refusal to provide camels for the pilgrimage—would, on the other hand, render a railway from Damascus to the Akabah a very promising speculation, as the pilgrims, numbering sometimes over 20,000 souls annually, could be conveyed by rail at a tenth of the former cost.

Such, then, briefly sketched, are the main features of this interesting project. A great political future may perhaps await the Jewish nation, who appear to have in their own hands the power, should they seize the opportunity now presented by the condition of Eastern politics, of founding a Hebrew State which might in time extend over all Semitic Asia from Tigris to the Mediterranean, from Arabia to the Taurus; while fertile regions now desolate and unpeopled might, under the protection of the Western Powers, once more teem with life. Mr Oliphant's scheme has, nevertheless, one weak point—it was disinterested. For this reason it was open to misrepresentation and misconception at Constantinople, and raised the suspicions of the

Central Government. It is not perhaps a subject of surprise, considering the manner in which the Porte has of late been treated by Christian politicians, that sentiments of hate and distrust should have been roused in the minds of Moslem statesmen; but Mr Oliphant at least could not complain of any want of appreciation by the more enlightened and patriotic among Turkish rulers. He attributes the non-acceptance of his project to the influence of that evil "ring" of advisers who are encouraging the Sultan in his sullen resistance to Europe. The scheme suffered the fate which has attended every effort to save the Turkish Empire from itself during the last three years, and it is no proof of the impracticability of the idea, but rather an indication of its real utility, that it was not accepted by the present Government of the Sultan.

Meanwhile the future of Syria de-

velops slowly. It may be through a national outburst, driving the Turk from the land; it may be through the direct action of the Western Powers, giving autonomy, or perhaps independence, to Syria; or it may be by the efforts of private enterprise, and through the foundation of a Jewish colony, that the prosperity of the Holy Land will be secured; but, at the present time, the political aspect is symbolised by the setting Crescent and the rising of Ursa Major towards the Star of the East—as is aptly shown on the covers of the volume before us. And even if Mr Oliphant should be unable further to prosecute his well-considered scheme, he would have done good service to England in bringing clearly before the public mind the nature of those dangers which threaten our just interests in the Levant, and in suggesting a practical method whereby the vexed question of dealing with Syria might perhaps best be solved.

THE MINISTRY OF MISERY.

THE dawn of the New Year on which we are entering breaks upon as pitiable a political picture as ever it was the evil hap of Britain to look upon. A Cabinet, which little more than six months ago came forward boasting the full confidence of the country, and claiming to take the lead in the councils of Europe, stands paralysed and tottering on the verge of dissolution, because it has lacked the courage to preserve the lives and property of a small section of the citizens. Had the Ministry been shaken by a European crisis, as seemed not improbable only a short time ago — had it been imperilled by any great imperial danger, — its position might still have been dignified enough to extort sympathy even from its opponents; but what feeling except contempt can there be for a Cabinet that has ruined its reputation by boggling over a mere matter of police? Had the Government been weak or worn out, or had it been feebly supported in the House of Commons, its present condition might have had some claim on public compassion; but it has had itself proclaimed as a Cabinet of all the Cardinal Virtues, and its majority in the Commons is about the numerically strongest that ever supported an English Ministry. It needs no effort of personification to discern that the Nemesis of political dissimulation has pursued with hot foot the Gladstone Government, and seated itself with the Ministers at their Council Board.

The crisis is one that might have been easily foreseen. We do not say that it might have been so easily prevented. The course by which the present Premier secured

office for himself and his party could not fail to land his Government sooner or later into some such difficulty as that in which it is now involved. We have not yet reached that stage in our political development in which a statesman can be at once a Minister and a leader of the democracy. Mr Gladstone is not the first that has failed to successfully combine both functions. It was by skilfully playing upon the feelings of the masses, by working on their credulity, and by appealing to their class interests and prejudices, that he raised himself and his party to power. His dread of a democratic reaction corresponds with his sense of the obligations which he is conscious of owing to Radical support. But though he feels that his power depends upon his popularity with the Radicals, he knows that he cannot rule through the Radicals alone. He sought to make his Cabinet a coalition of Whigs and Radicals, with himself as the central point of union; and he so far succeeded that both sides are now equally pulling away from him in opposite directions. His aim was to form a Government of expediency on sham professions of principle; but he now discovers that his coadjutors were, if he were not, in earnest. If he seek to afford security to life and property, and to restrain men who are in rebellion against the common law, one section of his colleagues reproaches him with treason to his past utterances, and threatens to leave him to his fate: if he endeavour to palter or capitulate with those who sympathise with the enemies of property and order, the other side draws from him in disgust. The popular confidence in

Mr Gladstone's capacity for statesmanship must rest upon foundations deeper than those of reason, if it can survive the shock which it is at present experiencing.

Mr Gladstone has solely himself to blame for his present troubles. Since he quitted office in 1874, his action with regard to Ireland has been as reckless as it was inconsistent. As long as he could, he maintained that the two Radical measures of his previous Ministry—the abolition of the Irish Church and the Irish Land Bill—had removed the only solid causes of Irish discontent. More than that, he insisted that we were reaping the fruits of his legislation in a greater degree of loyalty and regard for order on the part of the Irish themselves. Even after the success of the Home-Rulers had shown that the chief effect of the abolition of the Irish Church had been to concentrate the elements of disaffection into hostility against the Union, Mr Gladstone still vaunted the good results of his Irish policy. It was not until the general elections arrived, and a probability arose that the Home-Rulers might hold the balance of parties, that Mr Gladstone began to see that there still remained something to be done for Ireland. And even then he was unwilling to give up his estimate of the completeness of the remedies which he had administered to Irish grievances. Even in his Mid-Lothian speeches he boasted of the condition of Ireland as attributable to his legislation. The Queen's Speech at the opening of Parliament, although it announced that the Peace Preservation Acts would not be renewed, did not recognise the existence of any grievance connected with the Irish Land. It was the necessities of his own position that made Mr Gladstone a convert to the demands of the Land

League. Lord Beaconsfield's usual foresight did not fail him when, in words too applicable to the present Premier to be misunderstood, he predicted that the agitators who were clamouring against the policy of preserving the integrity of the Empire would not be able to refrain from making political capital out of the attempts to dismember the United Kingdom. "There are some," wrote Lord Beaconsfield in his manifesto addressed to the Duke of Marlborough, "who challenge the expediency of the Imperial character of this realm. Having attempted, and failed, to enfeeble our colonists by their policy of decomposition, they may perhaps now recognise in the disintegration of the United Kingdom a mode which will not only accomplish, but precipitate, their purpose." Mr Gladstone has ever been successful in accommodating both his views and principles to the circumstances of his own situation; and it was not to be supposed that he would prove more inflexible in the case of Ireland than he had previously shown himself in matters of scarcely less importance. When the time came to turn Ireland to his account, he was quite prepared to review his position.

We can scarcely suppose that the obstructive power which the Home-Rule party exhibited in the new House of Commons supplied the motive to the Premier for renewing his interference with the Irish Land. Nor is it likely that the fact of a considerable number of his supporters having been returned under a pledge to vote for an inquiry into the demands of the Home-Rulers wholly prevailed with him. But both these circumstances unquestionably united in aiding him to come to the resolution at which he subsequently arrived. His determination to bring forward a new

land policy sprung directly from his refusal to renew the Peace Preservation Act, and was forced on him by the difficulties which sprung from the announcement. Nothing could have been more uncalled-for, more impolitic, or more calculated to encourage the excesses of the Land League, the organisation of which had just then been extended to all parts of the country, than the intimation in the Queen's Speech that the Peace Preservation Acts would not be renewed. We can only account for such a declaration by a studied desire to insult the Conservative Government, which had not shrunk from securing peace in Ireland by exceptional means. Having once embarked in a vain-glorious effort to preserve order in Ireland by moral influence, Mr Gladstone was not to be turned from his course by the increase of assassination, unlawful combinations, terrorism, and anarchy. In his Mid-Lothian campaign he made many unfortunate speeches which he doubtless now regrets, but none of his observations had a more unhappy effect than his reference to the connection between the Clerkenwell explosion and the Manchester *émeute* and his own Irish legislation. The statement was one of those idle oratorical outbursts which Mr Gladstone's admirers accept as expressions of profound wisdom, but to which he himself was prepared to attach no practical significance. But the Irish took the hint as a direct cue. The leaders in the disaffected journals, the speeches of Mr Parnell and the other ringleaders of the mob, bear witness to the serious import which these attached to his suggestion. Unfortunately, Mr Gladstone's policy has corresponded with the spirit of his unguarded remarks. To the public it has seemed as if the Premier had for the past four

months been engaged in totalling up the long tale of murders, outrages, and violations of the law, and asking himself whether the Irish were as yet sufficiently rebellious, blood-stained, and dishonest as to merit his interposing for their advantage. He has certainly been less easily satisfied on this occasion than at the time of the Clerkenwell explosion. If demerit is to be rewarded on this occasion in proportion to the last, the Land Leaguers will have little left to fight for.

It is interesting to try to fix the circumstances under which Mr Gladstone gave in his adhesion to the anti-landlord policy of the disaffected agitators. We have seen that, as late as the opening of Parliament, he did not contemplate immediate interference with the existing land laws. We have seen, also, that he had committed himself to a rash promise to preserve order in Ireland without having recourse to the Coercion Acts. But when Mr Gladstone's moral influence was set at nought, and the agitators were obviously turning the impunity promised them by the Premier to dangerous account, it became necessary to do something. At the opening of Parliament, Mr Gladstone had not contemplated doing anything for Ireland beyond extending the borough franchise. With this, and with the advances for the relief of distress, he hoped to keep the people in a sort of humour. But the threatening attitude which the Land League now began to assume, and the success which attended its attempt to organise the masses in opposition, rendered neutrality on the part of the Government impossible. The Premier had to choose between coercion and bribery. He chose the latter. Under cover of a Bill for dealing with Irish distress, a measure which had not been promised,

and which was not called for—for distress was by that time virtually at an end—a clause was introduced which involved a serious diminution of the landlord's rights. For this Mr Forster is mainly responsible; and this consideration cannot fail to qualify our sympathy for the loss of reputation which he has sustained, and the odium he has incurred, by his unfortunate connection with Irish affairs. The objectionable features in the Irish Distress Bill, when exposed by the Opposition, were subsequently brought forward in the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, when the intention of the Government to make an approach to the agitators became more plainly revealed. That the Government had changed its tactics, was proved by the fact that it had strenuously opposed a measure brought forward by Mr O'Connor Power, one of the disaffected leaders, containing provisions practically identical in spirit with the clauses of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill. In fact, there is every reason to suppose that Mr Power's Bill supplied the ideas of confiscation for the Compensation for Disturbance Bill. It was not till the last night of the debate that the Premier came forward to support the measure; and his language on that occasion corroborated the suspicion that the measure was meant to be a bribe to the Irish party. He endeavoured to argue that the Bill itself was a mere extension of the Land Act in a direction meditated by the promoters of the legislation of 1870; but this was denied by speakers behind him on the Liberal benches; while men of practical experience in the working of the Land Act, like Mr Gibson, showed beyond question that the Compensation Bill violated the principles and exceptions of that measure, as well as Mr

Gladstone's own speech in introducing it. Mr Gladstone's strongest point was, that the measure was brought forward to meet an emergency; but then the emergency had been created in the course of two months by the Premier's intimation that he would not renew the Peace Preservation Acts.

It is a stock plea of the Ministry that the increase of Irish anarchy during the last few months is due to the action of the House of Lords in rejecting the Compensation Bill. On this point the evidence of the Irish themselves must be worth something. Mr Parnell himself has declared that the sole reason why he did not attempt to defeat the Bill in the Commons was his confidence that it would be thrown out by the Peers. The disaffected press ridiculed the idea of its being accepted as an equivalent for the demands of the Land League; and the Irish masses were profoundly indifferent as to its fate. The only complaints that have been made of the action of the Lords have come from Mr Gladstone's immediate supporters, and from the revolutionary class that never ceases to decry the existence of a hereditary Legislature. The measure itself is a proof of how little the Cabinet comprehended the character of those whom it was seeking to soothe by legislation. No greater misapprehension could be formed of the Irish character than to imagine that the masses under the direction of their leaders would be satisfied with half a loaf rather than run the risk of a whole one or no bread.

Such is the present unhappy relationship in which the Premier stands to Irish agitation. It is due, as we have pointed out, first to his announcement that the Peace Preservation Acts would not be renewed,—an idle brag intended to cast odium upon the Opposition;

secondly, to the lawlessness and anarchy which followed directly upon the avowal of that determination; and thirdly, to his declaration in favour of the agitators' demand for confiscation, as signified by his adoption of the principles of the Compensation for Disturbance Act.

Let us now consider the position of his colleagues whom he is so strenuously endeavouring to keep from breaking off from a Government that has disgusted the one half of its friends by its inertness, and that now threatens to alienate the other half by action. These may conveniently be regarded as Whigs or Radicals, for the middle party of place-holders, who are the Premier's only assured support, cannot be said to possess any interest in the opinion of the public. To the Whig section of the Cabinet, prominent in which are Lords Hartington and Granville, and the Duke of Argyll, the present situation of affairs in Ireland, and the course which the Premier proposes to adopt, must be compromising and painful beyond conception. The "plain Whig principles," which were so boldly enunciated at the commencement of the Session, have all been thrown to the winds, and still plainer Radical theories substituted in their place. The authority of the Crown, the sanctity of property, the obligations of the law, and even the freedom of the subject—all the grand old traditions of the great Whig party, are to be wiped away in favour of anarchy, spoliation, and an interpretation of the law which bids a man obey it only when it chimes in with his own views and interests. The Whigs brought about Catholic Emancipation. Can they, or will they emancipate the Irish landlords from a worse oppression than the Papists groaned under, even in the times

when the Penal Laws were executed with most rigour? The Whigs secured us Free Trade, and now they cannot secure a farmer or landlord an open market for his poultry or dairy produce, or protect the railways and steamboat companies in carrying his cattle from one port to another. The position of the Whig members of the Cabinet has excited general sympathy. They have been credited, no doubt justly, with having striven hard during the last two months to induce the Cabinet to vindicate the authority of the law and to re-establish the Queen's Government in Ireland. And they have hitherto striven in vain; for, as we shall presently see, recourse to coercion loses both its political and moral effect when it is had in company with concessions, and with a policy of cajolery. We have now reached the point when the "plain Whig principles" must be either asserted or for ever abandoned. Mr Gladstone is evidently about to take a "new departure" in English policy, in which the Whigs cannot be his companions if they are to remain Whigs. In more trivial matters, an allowance can always be made for the trimming of party sails and shifting of ballast to keep the vessel right; but the situation in Ireland, and the issues involved in it to the Constitution and the British people, are of too grave a character to afford any justification of a compromise of principles. It can only have been through a sense of duty that the Duke of Argyll and Lords Hartington and Granville have remained so long in the Cabinet. But it is one thing to remain in office for the patriotic aim of influencing the policy of an untrustworthy Government; it is entirely another matter to become the participants in unworthy measures. As soon as a definite course is determined

upon, the Whigs must become equally implicated with the authors of the resolutions that it is proposed to put in force. It is difficult to conceive how men claiming to be actuated by the ordinary feelings of gentlemen can consent to be classed as colleagues of a Minister who, as in the case of Captain Boycott, can first ruin a man and then deliberately insult his sufferings. Had a reply such as that which Mr Gladstone caused to be penned to Captain Boycott issued from the Treasury while a Conservative Ministry was in office, it would have been denounced in every part of the country as the most infamous ever written under the auspices of an English Government.

On the other side of the Cabinet stand Mr Bright and his allies,—a small section, but one that has made itself a power in the helpless condition of the other parties. Mr Bright is the only prominent member of the Cabinet whose position possesses the merit of consistency. He has all through his public career been an enemy to landed property, and indeed to every other species of property except the sacred savings of manufacturing enterprise. He has never dissembled his enmity to the authority of the Crown, and cannot naturally be much distressed at seeing it paralysed. He has all along denounced the House of Peers, and as he seeks to foist upon that body the blame of the anarchy which has been caused by the Premier, he is very likely to view with satisfaction the extent to which lawlessness and disorder have increased in Ireland within the last few weeks. Throughout his recent speeches a vein of undisguised sympathy with the enemies of the Irish landlord has been plainly manifested; and, instead of doing his duty as a sworn—we beg his pardon,

an affirmed—servant of the Crown, by insisting upon the firm repression of disaffection and lawlessness, he has been prating of spending millions from the Imperial Exchequer for the establishment of Mr Parnell's followers upon holdings of their own. A delight in anarchy comes congenial to Republican theorists. It is their golden opportunity, especially if the executive be timid; and we cannot feel either surprised or offended that the Brights and the Chamberlains should seek to impede energetic action even in the present extreme case. They are true to their principles; but the painful feeling is, that men of such principles should be enrolled in the ranks of British statesmen.

Mr Forster deserves a word for himself. Of all the appointments made by the Premier, the selection of Mr Forster as Secretary for Ireland gave the most general satisfaction. Confidence in his honesty and shrewdness was not confined to his own party; and there was a strong disposition to believe that if any Liberal statesman could devise an honourable and just means of quieting Ireland, Mr Forster would be the man. As matters have turned out, he has proved to be simply the most unfortunate, as well as the most inefficient, Secretary that Ireland has had since the Union. He has never, from the day he entered office, been able to feel his way in Irish affairs. He blundered at the outset by seeking to intermix concessions to the disaffected portion of the people with a measure professedly for the relief of distress. He sought far and wide for advice which he did not dare to follow when it was tendered to him. He committed both himself and the Government by the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, and he has shrunk from mak-

ing a vigorous use of the executive power which, if exerted at an earlier stage, would have done much to stem the tide of terrorism. He may be a victim to the undecided policy of the Government; but he still has his own share, and it is by no means a slight one, of responsibility for the present condition of Ireland to bear. Mr Forster's influence for good in Ireland is clearly at an end; and there will be no regret, either for himself or for the country, should the repeated rumours of his resignation speedily find verification.

But the Cabinet and the country are not the sole parties that are concerned in the condition of Ireland. We have still the Throne to appeal to; and in seasons of peril like the present, we may be permitted with reverence to represent to her Majesty the obligations due to the dignity of her crown. A month ago her Majesty ruled in Ireland; can we say to-day that she is in reality sovereign of that country? British loyalty must have changed greatly for the worse, if the thought of the position into which the Ministry has betrayed the Crown does not send a general thrill of indignation through the hearts of the subjects of the United Kingdom. Intent upon its own popularity and party policy, the Cabinet seems to feel no compunction that it has allowed the authority of Victoria to be supplanted by that of the Land League. We were prepared to expect a temporary effacement of the Crown while Mr Gladstone is in office; we had still to learn that he was prepared to allow its dignity to be set at naught. In the course of a few days he will announce, through the medium of a Royal Speech, the measures which he intends to employ towards Ireland. Is the Queen's name to be employed as conveying a sanction

to concessions to men who are making the worst use of the powerful weapons in their hands to obstruct her Majesty's authority? Is her Majesty's authority to be used to give colour to an enactment for transferring a portion of the property and privileges of the only loyal class of subjects that the Queen has in Ireland to men who are rebels to her at heart, and who have set her laws openly at defiance? We put these questions with loyal hesitation; but the times demand plain speaking, and we are, thank God, still a monarchy.

If we are to intervene in the Irish question by legislation, it is well to ask for whom we are to legislate, and what we hope to gain by new laws. The Government evidently think that they are taking a creditable course when they make coercion go hand in hand with concession. To the minds of most people, the one course would seem calculated to neutralise the other. It is, moreover, setting all the precedents of statesmanship at defiance to legislate for Ireland in its present condition. No general would make terms with rebels until they had first laid down their arms; and the Irish masses are virtually as much in rebellion as if they were arrayed against us in the field with the arms, which they have concealed, in their hands. Pacify the country; restore the authority of the law; proscribe the Land League and all other combinations that obstruct the Government and mislead the people; dismiss the question of Home Rule finally from the region of practical politics; and then, when we have a submissive and peaceful population, let us inquire into their disabilities and enact any laws that may be necessary for their material advancement. Any Cabinet, be it Whig or Tory, fol-

lowing such a course, would deserve the best support that Great Britain could give it.

And what ends do the Government propose to compass by legislating on the Land question? It cannot pretend that the present attitude of the Irish people is due to their discontent with their tenures; or that any concessions made in this direction will insure the return of the people to the position of loyal and peaceable subjects. No legislation will satisfy the agitators who are striving to burst the Union; and any benefits transferred from the landlords to the farmers will simply be turned to account in swelling the spirit of disaffection, and in increasing the means of mischief already at the disposal of its leaders. Mr Plunkett accurately described the position of the Land League the other day at Chesterfield, when he said there were two institutions against which its organisation was directed,—first, against the existence of property at all; and secondly, against the existence of the British Government. Short of conceding these points, there are no means of making a “moral con-

quest” of the Irish. No land bill that the Government can bring forward will satisfy Mr Parnell and his friends. If there is to be peace in Ireland, these men must be put down, and an effectual check finally imposed upon the Home Rule agitation and the struggle to wrest the Irish land from its present possessors. The Government has at last made a feeble commencement of opposing the malcontents, and has thus performed in the month of December a duty which it ought to have discharged in the month of May. The gain to itself from the postponement of repression has therefore been less than nothing, while to Ireland the delay has brought misery incalculable. Mr Gladstone may, and probably will, flinch from doing the full extent of his duty; but the spirit of Great Britain is at length aroused, and no considerations of party, no regard for individuals, will prevent her from meting out to the disaffected in Ireland, and the scheming agitators by whom its masses have been misled, that full measure of retributive justice which has been so long overdue.

BLACKWOOD'S

EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCLXXXIV.

FEBRUARY 1881.

VOL. CXXIX.

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY.—PART IV.

CHAPTER IX.

MENTION has been made of a certain architectural design which Clifford had handed over to his secretary for her criticism. It was for a building to provide accommodation for the single working men in the neighbourhood of his country-house. These, in the absence of other quarters, lodged in the different cottages occupied by the married people, already barely sufficient for the decent requirements of the latter. Education, argued Clifford, would alone not do much for these tillers of the soil so long as they were herded together like swine; and a first step towards the necessary reform in this respect was the provision of proper lodgings for all the unmarried labourers. His plan, accordingly, embraced a sort of club-house large enough to hold as many of these as lived in his parish. This, at Miss Reid's suggestion, had undergone considerable modification, and now included accommodation for a matron, who was to act as a sort of steward to the establishment, and to cook for the party,

besides giving instruction in cookery to the married women in the village. Some of the rooms had also been designed to hold sick people, so that the building would in effect comprise a cottage-hospital. The design was now complete, but there had been some difficulty in obtaining a site. Clifford's own house had very little land attached to it, and moreover was not sufficiently central; and the proprietors whose lands were most conveniently situated had been at first unable or unwilling to sell any ground. Clifford's uncle had been unpopular with the gentry in the neighbourhood, and he himself had not done anything to remove the impression they held about him, while the scheme itself was not very favourably received by either squires or farmers. However, all difficulties had at last been surmounted, and two eligible sites had been offered, from which it now only remained to make a choice. But of late Clifford had been growing rather cold about the matter. His cousin

had for the time driven philanthropy almost out of his thoughts, and moreover, a new scheme had occurred to him which seemed more attractive.

"Do you think it is really worth the money?" he said doubtfully to his secretary one day as they were examining the amended design.

"You know I think you often throw away your money," she replied, "and I tell you so, perhaps oftener than you like; but this scheme seems as free from objection as any you have taken up. You will get four per cent for your money, and you will demoralise nobody, which is more than can be said for a good deal that you do."

"I have not demoralised you, at any rate," he answered; and then observing that she looked distressed, he added hurriedly, "but is this not only a good thing in itself, but the best thing to be done? My means, after all, are limited, and I have a plan in view which might be still more useful. The lease of my court is just running out. I could pull down those miserable hovels and erect some decent lodging-houses in their place."

"There could be no doubt about that being a good work," said the young lady, with enthusiasm; "but it would be a much larger scheme, would it not, and would cost a great deal more money?"

"I could pay off the amount in five years. Of course I should have to retrench in other ways and stick to the one job."

"You mean to say that you would have to borrow the money, and go into debt for it? Oh, pray, sir, whatever you do, don't go into debt."

"Not even in such a good cause as this?" asked Clifford, amused at the sudden animation of her manner.

"Not for any cause whatever," she exclaimed, eagerly; "debt de-

stroy's one's independence, and even one's character; conduct, and truth, and honour, all the virtues give way under it."

"Why, what do you know about it?" he asked. Then remembering the mystery of her life, could it be, he thought, that she was speaking from her own experience? Had she been tempted in this way, and fallen? But no, this was impossible. She was pure and guileless, he was sure. Yet noticing her confusion, he went on, hurriedly,—“But, you simple child, this is not a case of running in debt, as you understand it. I could borrow the money at four per cent on the security of the building, and get between five and six back in rents, so that the amount might stand on mortgage indefinitely if I did not choose to pay it off. The thing is done every day; but of course there is a good deal in what Miss Prudence says about not tying one's self up too much.”

"Is it not a pity, too, to be changing your mind so often? The reasons in favour of this scheme are just as strong as when you were so keen about it a fortnight ago."

"True, child, and your wisdom lights up my folly. Well, the village club be it. But now to make a final choice between the rival sites." And he went over the conflicting points which rendered decision difficult: this was most central, that had the best soil; this had the best aspect, that was most sheltered;—and so on.

The secretary pronounced in favour of the first site. It faced to the west.

"Yes; but then, don't you see, Miss Wisdom, that the west is practically cut off by the wood, behind which the sun would set at about three o'clock of a summer's afternoon? Shade in summer is all very well, yet you may have too much

of a good thing. But, after all, how are you to know this without having seen the place? What a pity it is," he continued, "you have not seen it! Would it not be as well if you were to go down there and have a look at it, and then you would be able to come to a final opinion on the case?"

"That is just as you think proper, sir," she replied, reverting to her business manner, and still leaning over the plans.

"I'll tell you what," said Clifford suddenly, after a pause, "we will both go down together, and then we shall be able to settle the matter on the spot. Yes, that will be the best plan; we can run down in a couple of hours, and get back the same evening. And we can take Simmonds with us," he continued, noticing the hesitation with which his companion had received the proposal; "she will enjoy paying a visit to her native place."

Accordingly, the next morning the three persons who were to make up the party met at the Euston Station, Clifford coming on foot; Mrs Simmonds, who was inclined to be stout, and a bad walker, in a cab; how Miss Reid reached the station Clifford did not know, but she was there first. Somehow, although he had known her so long, and had been so much with her, he had never before seen her at a distance; and as she came down the platform to meet him, he had time to notice her pretty slim figure and light step. "She looks quite a girl," he thought, "at this distance, when one does not scan closely the thoughtful intellectual cast of her features, and the careworn expression they sometimes bear. She walks, though, as if she were walking on business: how different from the carriage of my cousin, who moves as if time were no object, and everything in the world were indifferent to her!

Perhaps if my little secretary had nothing to do but amuse herself, she would get a languid carriage too. After all, she is not so very little; she is nearly as tall as I am."

"I have not taken any ticket," said Miss Reid, as they shook hands. "I did not know by which class you wished me to go."

"That is right," he replied, "I will take the tickets;" and presently emerging from the booking-office, he presented Simmonds with a second-class one, while keeping two first-class ones himself. "Now, then," he said, "let us take our places. Here is a good carriage. Which side do you like to sit on? with your face to the engine? So I do. You shall sit next the window? Now then, boy, some papers?" and it being Friday, Clifford was able to procure a large assortment. "Here you are," he said, handing them to her to choose from. "Which will you begin with? here is every form of unreason and platitude."

"You are not used to be so extravagant," she said, taking one of the papers.

"So you think I am a screw, do you?" he asked, sitting down beside her.

"How can you say that?" she replied,—“you of all men in the world. But you know I admire you for your frugality about yourself—so unusual with men."

She said this in a tone of enthusiasm very unlike her ordinary subdued and reserved manner, and which Clifford thought very winning, although his inward comment was, "Now she is trying to flatter me."

"What has Mrs Simmonds got to read?" asked his companion.

"I had quite forgotten Simmonds. I suppose she will buy a penny paper."

"Let me take her this 'Illus-

trated ; ' she will never think about buying a paper herself."

"Very good," replied Clifford, settling himself in his seat, while Miss Reid left the carriage with the paper to find Simmonds, and then returning, also began to read ; and so the train started.

The lady who was the third occupant of the carriage, wondered what was the relation between the young couple. Something in their manner, to say nothing of the absence of any family likeness, declared them not to be brother and sister. They could hardly be bride and bridegroom, or he would not have allowed the lady to run on an errand. Indeed they were evidently not married, for no sign of a ring could be detected under the neat glove on the lady's left hand. Who could they be—so intimate, and yet between whom there was no visible tie? Cousins perhaps ; or can she be a deceased wife's sister? That was it, evidently. To this conclusion the lady, who watched her fellow-travellers furtively from over the top of her book, was drawn still further, when, after he had read through the newspapers, Clifford took out of his hand-bag a bundle of what appeared to be law papers—the architect's specification for the lodging-house, in fact—and began discussing the contents with his companion. But the lady had not settled the doubtful point quite to her satisfaction, when the train stopped, and her fellow-passengers got out.

"This is Welford," said Miss Reid, as they stood on the platform. "I thought you lived near Ashham?"

"Yes, but this train does not stop at Ashham ; there is a pick-up train for Ashham in a few minutes ; but after being so long away, it might not look well to go down there just for a day only, so I think it will be

better to stop here instead, and drive over. We shall have to drive four miles instead of one ; but there will be less fuss. Let us have some luncheon at the inn opposite, while they are getting a carriage ready for us ;" and so saying, he led the way to the railway hotel. Miss Reid understood and appreciated his motives, and was still more relieved when he said, pointing to the arbour of the little hotel garden, "Suppose we two have our lunch there in the shade, while Simmonds has hers in the house." In this way the difficulty was got over which no doubt had occurred to Miss Reid as well as to himself. Thus they had their first meal together, unless an occasional cup of tea be so called. When the waiter brought the cold beef across from the house, Miss Reid offered to carve ; but Clifford, rising from his seat, performed that office. He would not allow her even to cut the bread. On this day and in his own neighbourhood she should be the visitor and he the host.

"I suppose we must order something to drink for the good of the house," he said, doubtfully. "Will you try some wine?"

"I never drink wine, thank you."

"Neither do I in the middle of the day ; and beer will be fatal to that clearness of head needed for further operations. However, we can order that, and leave it without much extravagance."

"Still it will be waste."

"No ; for the waiter will drink it. She looks a beer-drinking lass. All of your sex are not so abstemious as you. My cousin drinks stout at luncheon, and yet she does not grow very fat upon it." Clifford had often talked to her about his aunt and cousin, but with an assumption of indifference.

"The work of a London season must be very hard."

"And, pray, what do you know about the work of a London season, I should like to know?"

"I have read about it in novels."

"Read about it in novels? So you read novels, do you?" he retorted, playfully. "And when, may I ask, do you find time for reading novels? I thought you were always slaving in my service."

"I don't read very much now of anything. But I have had a good deal of leisure at one time." A look of sorrow passed over the girl's face, and Clifford forbore to press the subject, while feeling that his curiosity to know something of the private history of his secretary had never been stronger than at that moment.

The carriage was now ready—an open fly—and they set off for their drive, Mrs Simmonds occupying the back seat. The country was flat, and the monotonous uniformity of the fields and hedgerows would have had at most seasons little interest except to a foxhunter; but just now nature had spread her fairest carpet of early June over the landscape. The warm sunny day was in grateful contrast to the cold late spring just ended; the wayside cottage gardens were brilliant with flowers; already in some fields the mowers were at work; elsewhere the long grass bent in waves under the light breeze. Miss Reid was in higher spirits than Clifford had ever seen her before.

"You like being in the country?" he said presently, noticing the animated expression of her face.

"Oh yes. I should like always to live in the country; and yet I don't know. To appreciate it properly, I suppose one must live in a town. We never value what we have till we lose it. Perhaps the best arrangement is to work in town, as I do, and to sleep out of it. The country seems the sweeter

of an evening from having been in London all the day."

"And getting away from the dreary Alexandra Mansions?"

"Oh no; I did not mean that, of course."

"Why of course? Because you brighten my life by your presence, it may still be dreary for you."

This was said in an undertone, and, as soon as said, Clifford felt that he had said too much, and was being disloyal to his cousin. Neither of them spoke again for a time; and it was a relief when Simmonds, intent on noticing the different signs of their approach to her native village, now cried, "Oh, there's the church-spire behind the trees,—well, I do declare!" as if it were rather surprising that the church had not moved its place or disappeared altogether during her absence.

"Here is one of the two sites," said Clifford, calling to the driver to stop; "we had better look at this one first;" and alighting, he assisted his companion to do the same. "But now, Simmonds, you won't be interested in this; you had better drive on to your sister's and wait there for us. And look here, Simmonds," he added in a low voice, returning to speak to her as the fly was driving off; "your people will be sure to be wanting to know who Miss Reid is. Just say that she is a lady from London who is very learned about working men's clubs and model lodging-houses, and suchlike, and who has come down to give an opinion about this one."

Then the two unrolled the plan of the building together, and compared it with the piece of ground on which they were standing—a small patch of open common by the roadside. Afterwards Clifford led the way to the rival site, also outside the village, and which could

be reached by a path through the fields without entering the latter.

Their doubts were soon resolved by the personal visit. Miss Reid pronounced decidedly in favour of the second site, and he entirely agreed with her. "Another advantage," he remarked, "will be, that it will be in view of my own house. There it is. You can just see the roof to the left of those high trees. I should very much like to have a look at the old place again," he continued; "and there would be plenty of time to do it and catch our train. Would you mind walking round that way? Here is a by-path."

They crossed a field which led them to a paling running outside a hedge, with a wicket-gate. This was unlocked, and opened into a straggling neglected garden. Right of them was the house. On their left the garden sloped down to a pond. He led the way across the garden, and through a shrubbery by a path which, passing round the house, brought them out on the lawn in front of it. The house was of red brick, three storeys high, devoid of all architectural pretension, but relieved from vulgarity by the mellow tint of age and the creepers reaching far up the walls. Before the house was a fair expanse of lawn, but ill kept, and disfigured rather than adorned by some clumsy flower-beds. The lawn was bordered by a sunken fence, beyond which were meadows and an orchard.

"The house is too big for the ground," said Clifford, as they looked about them; "or rather, the ground is not big enough for the house. The orchard belongs to me, and that field and the one beyond, as well as that slip of wood at the back of the garden. These make up the whole of the estate. That same wood was the scene of a tragedy, for it was there that a

litter of foxes was supposed to be made away with by my uncle's order, or with his connivance. The story is somewhat apocryphal, but it served to embitter my uncle with all his neighbours, and is one among various reasons for my not living here. I suppose the quarrel need not have descended to his heir; but I would not be at the trouble of making the first advances, and they would not make any move, and so there the matter stands. I am afraid I am not a very good hand at making advances." He stole a glance at her, but she turned away her eyes, and he continued—"Still it might be made into a pretty place enough, might it not?"

"It might indeed, if the garden were laid out and trimmed with taste."

"Yes, but taste in gardening is just what I fear I have not got; still less the persistent energy for carrying through such a job. But I think I could lie on the grass very comfortably of a summer's day, and look on while some one else was doing it, just as I dawdle over my books while you are running about London on my behalf."

He hoped in his heart that she would contradict him, and tell him that he did himself injustice; but she replied, less satisfactorily, that we none of us could tell what we could do till we tried. We were all very much creatures of habit.

"Yes, and I have got very much into the habit of not trying, but of depending on you for everything." There was more implied in the manner than the words. His companion, standing beside him on the lawn, looked so fair and graceful, that she bore quite another aspect to the one usually associated with her in his mind. So self-contained and strong-minded as she was ordinarily, she looked feminine enough to-day, and for the first time he

became distinctly possessed by a feeling towards her of which he had been only at times dimly conscious before. The sentiment might even now be momentary, but it was reflected in the remark which followed after a pause.

"This, like everything else that belongs to me, needs the presiding influence of woman." Then, as if fearing that he had said too much, and without venturing to read in her face what effect his words had produced, he added hastily, "And the gardener's wife is hardly equal to the occasion. She and her husband appear to have gone somewhere for a holiday. But you ought just to see what the inside of the house looks like; come this way. I will be bound they have left the back door open," and he led the way through the shrubbery to the back garden.

The door was locked, but the key was hanging from a nail close by, barely concealed by the trellis-work against the wall, where Clifford at once found it, and they entered the house. The interior was in keeping with the outside, plain but commodious. The hall was large and lofty; it was furnished with some old-fashioned chairs, and a few dingy pictures hung against the walls. A substantial oak staircase led to the upper storey. But the whole wore the cheerless aspect of a house untenanted.

"This is the drawing-room," said Clifford, opening the door, "which we never made any use of; Stokes, you see, has not even thought it worth while to open the shutters. However, there would not be much to see. This was our regular sitting-room," he added, crossing the hall, and opening the opposite door, from which a ray of light came in upon the dim hall; "this is the library you have heard me speak of."

It was a very large room, the walls lined for the greater part with book-shelves, reaching to the ceiling. A writing-table stood at the end of the room, before the spacious bow-window. By the fireplace was an easy-chair and table, on which fell the light from a small side window. Opposite to these, on the other side of the fireplace, was another easy-chair, also supported by a little table. A large round table occupied the centre of the room. A thick Turkey-carpet covered the floor. All the furniture, although worn, was handsome and substantial. The room only wanted occupancy to look thoroughly comfortable.

"That was where my uncle used to pass his days," said Clifford, after a pause, pointing to the chair by the fire, "when he was well enough to come down-stairs; he would not stir out of the house for days together. I used to be writing at that table by the window, or else occupying the other easy-chair. I don't mean to say that I used to keep the house all day long. He always expected me to take some exercise, but he liked to have me about him a good deal when I was in the house. It was natural enough, perhaps, for he saw no one else but the servants, not even the doctor, till towards the end." And as Clifford looked round the room, his thoughts went back to the time he had spent there—time which seemed so long and dreary at first, till custom had reconciled him to the way of life, and his own habits had come to be formed in accordance with it.

"And this is the library of which the catalogue has to be made?" said the young lady, breaking the silence after a time.

"Part of it only. The passages up-stairs are full of book-shelves, and some of the rooms too. My

uncle was a great book-collector as well as a great book-reader, two characters not, I believe, often combined. You will have to come down and make a stay here when you take the catalogue in hand," he added, as if half in jest, although watching her face to see how she received the suggestion. But she was standing before one of the book-cases, looking at the titles, and appeared not to have heard it. He continued: "But how things have changed since I made that proposal! Then I was feeling quite burdened with the responsibility of having a secretary, and puzzled how to spin out employment for you; but now the days seem never long enough for all you have to do—for me. I don't know now what I should do without you."

"I am very glad you find me so useful." The young lady spoke in what seemed to be a jesting tone, as befitting a reply to mere *badinage*, and quite unlike her ordinary respectful and business-like mode of answering. It was so unusual that Clifford felt immediately prompted to follow up with a mode of address he had never before ventured upon, but his companion interrupted him.

"That I suppose is the portrait of your uncle?" she asked, pointing to the picture over the mantel-piece of an elderly man seated in an arm-chair. "It must be, for it is so like yourself. I never saw a stronger case of family likeness. It might have been your father rather than your uncle, it is so very like."

Clifford started; and had his companion been looking at him she might have noticed the blush brought up by her remark.

"Yes, and it is a very good likeness. My poor uncle," he said presently, looking up at the old man's face, "you meant kindly, no doubt."

"Surely he was kind; he left you everything——"

"Yes; but under what conditions!"

"You mean his keeping you from going to the university, and preventing you from choosing a profession? I don't think that has done you much harm after all."

"Is this merely flattery," he thought, "or does she really think well of me? How much of her admiration is for the master, and how much for the man? And is she herself made of flesh and blood, or is she merely a piece of pretty and delicate machinery in human form?" "No, Hilda," he said aloud, "I am thinking of other conditions—conditions which you know nothing about."

Hilda started as he pronounced her name, as much from the unusual sound—he had never called her by her Christian name before—as from something in the tone of his voice.

When Clifford set out that morning he had been conscious of a sense of pleasurable excitement at the prospect of the little expedition, but nothing more. He always enjoyed the society of his secretary, but often rebelled mentally against the formal terms established between them by mutual, although tacit agreement; and this excursion with her on a friendly footing, when the part of master and servant should be laid aside, would be an agreeable diversion. But as the day had passed on, he had become very sensible of a new feeling towards his companion, suddenly growing stronger; and now the opportunity, the solitude, the flavour of closer companionship, had all brought on an accession of emotion to which he had hitherto been a stranger. Clifford was not a passionate man, although capable of deep feeling; and there was little of the sensu-

ous about the object of his suddenly accumulated passion. The emotion that possessed him was rather that arising from a hope that his longing for close companionship might become suddenly satisfied. Why, he thought, must our relations with each other be always thus strained and formal? And the vision of Hilda occupying that room with him, really living there, as he had thrown out in jest, no longer a paid agent, but sharing his purse and his home without restraint or reservation, shedding around her the subtle aroma of grace and sweetness, of which the first breath now hung about him, came up delightfully to fill him with a new sense of happiness. His cousin for the moment was absolutely forgotten.

But while Clifford, for the first time possessed by passion, became for the moment a new man, he still had no thought of deliberate wrongdoing to his companion. "Does she not invite this advance from me herself?" he asked himself. "Simple and straightforward she certainly is, and I am not the dupe of a designing woman. Still, for all that, she is enough of a woman of the world to know what the world would think of our being here together. She must know that she has taken the first step. To one placed as she is, friendless, and with home-ties so slender that she is glad to accept her present ambiguous position for mere bread and clothing, what would there be so dreadful in the further natural step? And who am I that I should think the worse of her for it? Would she become lower than my own mother? Perhaps she is wondering all the time why I am so slow to take the hint. True, she has practised no wiles; and she will never sacrifice herself for passion. She has, perhaps, her

price, but she must indicate it herself. But no! if she would sell herself, I will not be the buyer, unless her heart goes with the bargain. If she comes to me, it must be for myself, not for what I can give. I do not desire so much to possess her as to gain her love. That is the point. What are her feelings towards me? Does she really like me, or does she in her heart despise me for what she thinks my simplicity?"

Such were some of the thoughts that coursed quickly through his mind, as he stood irresolute in the centre of the room; while she, moving towards the bow-window, had seated herself, and was gazing with face averted at the garden. He could not see how she looked, as he again addressed her, speaking slowly, and the excitement which possessed him indicated only by the hoarseness of his voice.

"Yes, Hilda, those conditions are harder than you are likely to imagine. I have no legal right to give this house a mistress of my own choice—that is, a mistress whose position would be recognised in law. Whoever consents to share my home must be content with no better bond of union than my love and loyalty."

"This is not strictly true," he added to himself; "there is one exception to the rule; but it is quite true as regards her."

Hilda rose from her chair, and, walking across the room towards the door without looking at him, said, "Had we not better be looking for the carriage? We shall lose the train if we do not make haste."

"Is she offended," he thought, "at my plain speaking, or merely coy, and wanting me to make further advances?" He followed her into the hall.

"You have not seen half of the

house yet," he said; "won't you have a look at the rooms up-stairs? and the rest of the books?" he added, by way of putting the suggestion on a business footing.

"I really think we had better be starting, sir," she replied, and made towards the passage which led out into the back garden. He took the use of the word "sir" to be an appeal to him not to abuse her defenceless position and her confidence in him, and followed her into the garden, feeling at once excited and ashamed.

"This way," he called out, as she took a wrong path. Her mistake gave him the lead; she followed him in silence as he passed out of the garden by the wicket into the road. There he stopped to let her go through, and then, shutting the gate, overtook her, and they walked together along the road in silence.

With the change from the darkened house to the bright sunshine came also a change in his feelings. His companion, for all her sweet face and light step, looked so matter-of-fact and self-contained that the notion of making love to her gave way to a sense of the greater fitness of their old relations of master and servant. Still, the excursion must not be allowed to come to an end without some sort of explanation: he felt all the unpleasantness involved in leaving such a gap in their intercourse unfilled up.

They were approaching the cottage where lived Simmonds's sister, and could see the fly standing before the door. Now or never he must say something. He stopped short in the road. His companion stopped too, and looked at him.

"I have not told you more about myself than you care to hear, I hope? You take an interest in my affairs, I am sure?" he continued, as she made no reply.

"Can you doubt it, sir?" she said. "Have I ever failed in this respect?"

Now they were back again on the old footing, and he was able to speak out clearly without expressing emotion.

"I am too much given to talk about myself, I know," he resumed; "but it is so sweet to have one sympathetic ear to hear my troubles, and you *are* very sympathetic, you know, for all you are so matter-of-fact. Some day, perhaps, I will tell you more about my circumstances. And yet," he continued to himself, "this is not at all what I intended to say; I wonder if she knows it!"

They had now joined Simmonds, and drove off to the station, getting back to Euston about five o'clock. Alighting at the platform, Miss Reid held out her hand to wish him good afternoon.

"Oh no, we must not part here," he said; "let me see you off. How are you going?"

"I can do very well, thank you, sir. I will take an omnibus."

"Omnibus be hanged! You shall have a cab, and charge it in your contingent bill."

Clifford knew very well that she often rode in omnibuses, but he did not choose she should do so when just fresh from travelling first-class with him. So poor relations are treated to the best of food and wine when staying with their rich ones.

"Simmonds shall go with you, if you like," he added, as he hailed a hansom.

"Oh no, thank you, that is quite unnecessary; I am quite able to take care of myself." She smiled as she spoke, but whether she intended to refer to the event of the day he could not tell.

"Then, Simmonds, you had better find your way home in a four-wheeler. I am not going home

direct. Where to?" he asked, as he handed Miss Reid into the hansom.

"Waterloo, please, Loop Line." She spoke with obvious hesitation. "Thank you so much."

"Waterloo Loop Line, cabman, and here is your fare. And, by the way," he added to Hilda, just as the cab was going off, "I am going to take a holiday to-morrow, so you had better do the same. Don't come to the office to-morrow at all."

"Then we shall have two days' arrears on Monday to work off?"

"Never mind; be sure you obey me."

As he waved an adieu and turned round, he saw his aunt's carriage drawn up against the pavement close by, and his aunt seated in it with two other ladies, who had just got in. She had evidently seen what had happened, and was trying to catch his eye, and he could not but go up to the carriage.

He explained that he had been down to Ashham for the day on business.

"And your friend, who has just got into the cab," asked his aunt, with a searching look, "has she been down to Ashham on business too?"

This was quite a random shot;

but Clifford felt himself blushing as he replied that it was a lady whom he knew who happened to be travelling down by the same train. He had just been assisting her into a cab.

"Then she is a lady?" said Mrs Scallan. "I shouldn't have thought it. Oh, Robert, you are a sad fellow, I am afraid," and Mrs Scallan held up a plump hand in mock reproof.

The other two ladies laughed.

"And where have you been?" he returned, to change the conversation. And Mrs Scallan said that she had come to the station to meet her friends, Mrs Cornelius P. Spurlin and Mrs Euphemia Pile, who were staying at the Langham Hotel, and had been down to see Warwick Castle. Blanche was spending the day with Miss Spurlin, and would be so sorry to have missed him.

Clifford raised his hat to the ladies, and then, declining the offer of a lift homewards—for he was a great walker, and never took a carriage if he could go on foot,—and reminding his aunt of their appointment for the morrow, stood bowing to the ladies while the carriage drove off.

CHAPTER X.

The next day was that fixed for the water-party. The original plan had been so far modified as to include Burrard, who, hearing Clifford discuss it with his cousin, had offered to join them, protesting that the excursion would be decidedly slow unless he was of the party. The notion of one fellow pulling two ladies on a river like the Thames was absurd. He would never be able to go against the stream.

"But we don't propose to try

it," said Clifford; "we mean to go down stream."

"It's all the same, my dear fellow," replied the other. "One rower and one lady is all right and proper; but one rower and a brace of ladies in the stern-sheets is a lubberly arrangement. No; let us have a light tub-pair and do the thing properly."

Clifford fell in with the suggestion readily enough; for although he would have liked to have Blanche all to himself, he felt in-

stinctively that she might become bored by a long day with no better company than her mother and himself. The young lady herself, although saying that she should be very glad if Captain Burrard joined them, in a tone which expressed perfect indifference, was nevertheless as much pleased as she was capable of being about anything. Mrs Scallan, for her part, hoped to find in this addition the opportunity for bringing Clifford and Blanche together.

The two gentlemen were to meet the ladies at Paddington Station; and Clifford was full of qualms lest the latter should be late, for Blanche was not often down so early, and punctuality was not among her strong points; but his anxiety proved on this occasion to be groundless. Miss Scallan, wearing a broad-brimmed hat and a light morning dress, quite in harmony with the occasion, which fitted her to perfection, looked if anything more beautiful than usual; and Clifford could not help mentally contrasting the appearance Blanche presented with that of his companion of the previous day. Miss Reid, too, had looked very charming, he thought; but the air of scornful indifference with which his cousin sauntered slowly down the platform, as if time were no object, and it was the business of the train to wait her pleasure, had a special fascination of its own, which seemed to impress itself even on the guards and porters. "And this splendid creature may be mine," he thought, "if I do but choose to ask her! While unless I ask her I shall be a beggar. Surely the terms are not so very hard!" The radiance of her appearance made her gracious manner in greeting him still more grateful than it would have been in ordinary course. The young lady, indeed, appeared to

be in an unusually good temper, and quite ready to be pleased with everything. Nevertheless, the railway journey would have been a distressful affair to Clifford if Burrard had not been there. He felt that it would be out of place to read a newspaper under the circumstances; yet to carry on conversation for an hour, and amid the noise of a railway carriage,—small-talk of the kind which he supposed would alone be pleasing to his cousin and aunt,—was what he knew himself to be quite unequal to. Happily Burrard, in his dry and lazy way, was sufficient in himself to make conversation for the whole party: the ladies had only to laugh, and throw in a word here and there; Clifford also had little to do but listen.

The party got out at Maidenhead, whither the boat engaged by Clifford had been sent to meet them. Shawls and wraps had been provided, but were not wanted at this hour; and the ladies taking their seats, the rowers, who were dressed in flannels all ready for their office, divested themselves of their coats and prepared to follow.

"Everything complete," observed Burrard, from the bank. "Our worthy host seems to have thought of everything—everything, that is, except——"

"Except luncheon. I propose that we should lunch at Egsmode—that is, if it is agreeable to my aunt: we can easily get there by two o'clock."

"Any place that you have chosen will do admirably, I am sure, Robert," said Mrs Scallan, whose knowledge of the Thames valley was but slight. "I suppose we shall find a clean inn."

"There is a very tolerable pot-house there, as pot-houses go on the river," observed Burrard; "but it was a mistake, depend on it, my

dear fellow, to lunch indoors on such a day as this."

Clifford explained, rather shyly—for he felt a little awkward at playing the host—that he proposed they should lunch out of doors, and had arranged accordingly.

"Right you are, my dear sir," said Burrard, stepping into the bow. "I thought you were not the man to throw away such a day as this. I hope you don't mind taking stroke: a morning of this sort makes me feel in a lazy humour."

Some little time was spent in trimming the boat, for Mrs Scallan was a good deal heavier than her daughter; and Clifford, contrasting the figures of the two ladies sitting opposite to him, could not help being struck by the resemblance between them. Although Mrs Scallan had never possessed her daughter's beauty, her still comely face recorded her good looks in youth; there was a strong family likeness between the two, and the ampler figure of the one was but an exaggerated representation of the flowing outlines of the other. Blanche at forty would probably be very like what the mother was now, and, while taller, quite as stout. And involuntarily the dreamy rower recalled another figure which gave no promise of such redundant development. "Hilda's refined features," he thought, "will always retain their delicate outline, and will always remain informed by the beauty of intellectual expression and sweet temper." Yet for the moment he was trying hard to fancy himself in love with his cousin.

Blanche was intrusted with the tiller-lines, and instructed how to use them; the rowers gave way, and the boat shot out from the bank on her voyage down the river.

"I say," observed Burrard to the stroke oar, after their first

spell of work, as the boat drew into Bray Lock, "which particular school had the honour of raising you? I forgot, though; you said you had been educated abroad. Well, you have got the right style, wherever you learnt it: I may be allowed to venture to say so much. I don't know many things, but I do know something about pulling. I was rather a good hand myself at Eton—I don't mind saying I was in the college eight."

Burrard could not have said a kinder thing. Clifford had in fact taken great pains to row well, having learnt carefully under one of the best watermen on the river; but his cousin would not have found this out of herself, and praise of this sort would go further with her than her own observation.

The day was beautiful,—the bright sunshine tempered now and again by a few white clouds borne across the sky by the light westerly breeze,—June at its best,—such a day as can be found only in an English summer; and even Blanche was animated as Burrard pointed out the various objects of interest while they rowed past the scenes familiar to his boyhood. Even the reaches below Eton, forbidden to Etonians in the mass, were familiar to him in virtue of his place in the college eight, who were allowed to have their spin, he explained, below the town. Mrs Scallan was quite enthusiastic about the beauty of the views, declaring that they reminded her of the Hudson, while the castle seen from the river was even finer than the Capitol at Washington; and Blanche for once did not contradict her.

"Ah, but you should see the river above Maidenhead," said Clifford, growing bold. "We must have another excursion some day, starting from Henley and going

past Marlow, and Cookham, and Cliefden. There you will see the Thames at its best. Do you think you shall be able to tear yourself away from London for another day?" he added to his cousin.

"I should like it immensely," said the young lady.

"I am sure she would," added the mother, also growing bold as she saw what a good temper her daughter was in. "Blanche enjoys simple pleasures of this sort much more than racketing, any day;" and again Blanche did not contradict her.

"Here ends my tether," said Burrard, as they rounded the reach beyond Old Windsor. "I was five years at Eton and never got beyond this. Clifford must be your pilot now; he knows every bit of the river."

Clifford was now looking out anxiously towards the shore. He had expended some pains on the arrangements for the excursion; it would be a terrible check to the good progress of the day if they should miscarry. But his anxiety was soon relieved when, as they approached a shingle beach which rose from the water, with the background of a wayside inn, a row of noble elms, and an itinerant photographer's cart, he descried a man with a hamper awaiting them on a little landing-stage projecting into the river.

"Here is our commissariat!" he cried. "Bow side a little, please, Blanche—I mean, pull the right-hand rope—and we will get alongside and take it on board."

"Commissariat!" exclaimed Burrard, as two large hampers were with difficulty squeezed into the bow of the boat; "why, your transport department is large enough to victual a company!"

"The ice takes up room," said Clifford, apologetically; "and now,

if you don't mind going a little way further, there is a delightful spot for stopping at just ahead, with shade, and grass, and everything."

They rowed past an island crowned with a pretty villa embowered in trees, facing a broad meadow backed by wooded hills—classic ground on both sides—and then stopped at a point where a clump of noble trees, bordering a rich lawn, overhung the water, deep up to the bank.

"Here is the spot I propose for our halt," he said, "if you are ready for luncheon; the river becomes less pretty for a bit below this. I have got leave for us to land here."

"What an administrator it is!" said Burrard; "a man with such a genius for organisation is quite thrown away in civil life; he ought to be a commissary-general."

"A charming spot, indeed," said Blanche.

"I am sure you gentlemen must want your luncheon after all your exertion," said her mother. "I am quite ready for mine, too, we breakfasted so early to-day." The boat was made fast to the shore by the rustic landing-place, the ladies were assisted to alight, and the hampers got out; and while the rowers placed the champagne in ice, the ladies spread the other contents of the hampers on the cloth; and then they all fell to, Miss Blanche doing justice like the others to the repast, which had the fault only of being over-abundant. The host, diffident and unaccustomed to entertaining, had supplied too much. But the others were not fastidious on this head. Luncheon ended, Burrard lighted his cigar, after in vain trying to persuade Clifford to try one also; and the party gave themselves up to the enjoyment of the hour, the ladies half sitting, half reclining, on their

cushions taken from the boat, the two gentlemen on opposite sides of the table-cloth, lying at full length on the grass. Clifford had never felt so much at ease with his cousin before; and if he did not talk much, the others also were disposed for a time to let the conversation flag a little; it was the reaction following on a hearty meal taken after an unwonted spell of exercise in the open air.

The conversation turned on the events for which the ground they were sitting on was famous. Neither his aunt nor cousin had heard of them before, except in a general way, and Clifford told the story. Blanche said it was very interesting, and her mother observed that it could not have happened in America, because they had no barons there, and no kings; "and as for the President, he is a mere nobody: he shakes hands with Scallan whenever he goes to see him, just as if Scallan were as good as himself. Scallan knows the President quite intimately."

"Ah, give me the essentials of monarchy," said Burrard, "as your President has while his turn lasts, and any one else may wear the trappings. How should you like to be a queen, Miss Scallan?"

"She is accustomed to receive homage as such already," said Clifford, waxing bold. "You shall be crowned the queen of beauty, Blanche."

"Very good, our host," said Burrard; "I quite concur; but you have taken that out of the 'Universe'? Did you see what was said about Miss Scallan in last week's 'Universe'?"

"That is one of the 'society' papers, is it not? I have never even read a single number of it. I don't take in any of them, and make a point of never looking at them even at the club."

"La, Robert, that is just like you," said his aunt; "you are so particular. We take in every one of them — the 'Universe,' and 'Downing Street,' and 'Town Talk,' and all."

"You don't read them, I hope, Blanche," said her cousin, whom the champagne and the rôle of host made very bold.

"They are the only papers that tell you the things one cares to hear about," said the young lady, apologetically. "All the regular papers are so stupid."

"It seems to me that they contain just the things that we ought not to care about. I know very little about society, of course, but it is surely a new and very unpleasant feature of the times that the reserve which used to be maintained about the private life of people in all classes should be thrown aside as it seems to be nowadays. There is something to my mind thoroughly disgusting in the notion that the sayings and doings of ladies in private life, and their appearance in their own homes, should be publicly commented on by any portion of the press, as is now the custom."

"Does the Countess take in the society papers?" asked Mrs Scallan of Burrard.

"I am sorry to say she does; and I am telling her she is very wrong to do so. And I hope by the time my sisters come out,—the little ones, I mean—the elder ones make the same excuse as Miss Scallan, and certainly they are old enough to take care of themselves,—the papers will not be allowed in the house. I quite agree with Clifford. I am not a particular man in a general way, but I draw the line here. What can be more offensive than such announcements as: 'Lady A.'s small and early last Tuesday was thoroughly pleasant; all the best people

were there'—the best people including the gentleman who writes the notice—'and the supper perfect;' or, 'I was glad to see Lady B. again in the Row yesterday, in a habit that fitted her exquisite figure like a glove, and looking more lovely than ever'; or, 'I am very sorry to hear that poor dear Lady C. slipped on the stairs of her house in Park Lane yesterday, and broke the small bone of her left leg just above the ankle. We shall miss her beautiful face in the cotillon for some weeks to come.' No, I am not a particular man in a general way, but I must say I draw the line at society papers."

"And then think what manner of men they must be who furnish these precious paragraphs," said Clifford. "Either—which I suppose is the case—they have not really been present at the entertainments which they profess to describe, but are simply so many Grub Street hacks; or, if they have really been present, they are guilty of a gross violation of confidence in describing what they have been permitted to see in the guise of private guests. Why do not the people whose hospitality is thus outraged take some means to resent it?"

"You are wrong there, my dear fellow; the offence is condoned; these writers *are* present, and, what is more, are very well received. It is not they who are in fault; small blame to them for writing as they do. No; the real offenders are those who encourage this publication of the details of their private life, and who really like it. It arises out of petty vanity. The truth is, a considerable section of our aristocracy is thoroughly snobbish at bottom, though I say it who shouldn't."

"That is quite a new view of the case to me," observed Clifford.

"It is the true one. After all, it is merely an old-standing condition of things reproduced under a new form. In bygone times the higher orders, as they are called, were conspicuous by their dress, and their equipage, and the number of their retainers. There was no mistaking a swell when you saw him; but nowadays, when everybody dresses alike, and railways have put an end to exclusiveness in travelling, they must still be conspicuous in some form or other. Vanity is at the bottom of it—vanity of the lowest sort. And the women are worse than the men. Rather than not be before the public in some way, there is nothing some of them would not be ready to do. And so they take out their notoriety through the medium of the society papers. That's how it is: they actually try to keep in well with these worthies. If people did not encourage them; if every one followed your good example, and ceased to take in the society papers, they must needs die. Meanwhile there is some satisfaction in thinking of the agonies these unhappy scribblers—these Mufflers and Scufflers, or whatever they call themselves—must undergo in trying to rack their feeble wits and their memories to produce their columns of petty small-talk week after week. Even when they do get hold of a good story, they always spoil it in the telling; even the old Joe Millers they are in the habit of reproducing lose all their point in the process. In one sense they are punished for their deeds; for surely, in the whole range of newspaper work, from that of the printer's devil upwards, there can hardly be a more dreary form of it than that which these panderers to the love of gossip are employed upon."

"Quite a sermon," observed Miss Scallan, after a pause.

"And from you, of all people

in the world," said Clifford. "I had no idea you were such a democrat."

"My dear fellow, have you yet to learn that there is no democrat so pronounced as the poor younger son?"

"I hope you will take the sermon to heart, Blanche," added her cousin. He found it very pleasant to play the new part of a mentor to her, and the young lady took the lecture in good part. And yet somehow the conversation left an unpleasant taste about it. True, Mrs Scallan was not very wise; still, Blanche ought not to need to be told these things; and the idea of his future wife being lectured by Burrard on a point of morals was not altogether agreeable. But that gentleman now gave a new turn to the conversation.

"Our excellent host's arrangements have been very perfect so far," he said; "but we are approaching the time of day when a cup of tea would be refreshing."

"We might have tea at Panting Crook," said Clifford: "we can get there easily in an hour; and we might leave the river at that point, if the ladies have then had enough of it."

"Then let us start, if the ladies are ready. But first there are these blessed hampers to be packed,"—and Burrard, being in a lazy humour, looked rather askance at the *débris* of the lunch, still spread on the cloth before them.

"No; that is woman's work," said Blanche, graciously. "I will pack up the hampers; that is quite in my line." Probably she had never packed or unpacked anything in her life.

"You must allow me to thwart you for once," said Clifford; "but to-day there must be no association with labour of any sort, except the labour of the oar. The packing of

the hamper has been arranged for." And in effect a man, hitherto unnoticed, who had been sitting in a punt a little way up the stream on the opposite side, at a signal from Clifford now crossed the river, to take charge of the hamper and apurtenances; and the party, entering the boat, started off again down the river, Burrard remarking that their host had turned out to be a perfect Monte Cristo.

Panting Crook was soon reached, the stream below Egsmede being rapid. The island above the weir, he suggested, would be the best place for landing; and this being unanimously approved, they rowed into the lock-channel, and Burrard stood up in the boat and turned round ready to catch hold of the bushes.

Coming out of the lock up the river was a boat, rowed by a single sculler, with a woman at the stern. The sculler appeared to have been having some altercation with the lock-keeper, and as he drew away fired off some parting shots of chaff or abuse. What he said could not be heard, but his voice sounded loud and vulgar. "'Arry having a Saturday outing with his sweetheart," observed Burrard. "Sweet-heart looks to be decidedly a cut above 'Arry,—always the case, I observe, in those social circles. Lovely woman always superior to 'Arry, until she opens her mouth and discovers that charming Cockney twang, which, I do think, is quite the sweetest thing in accents. Mary Anne generally has it even worse than 'Arry."

"Look out, my dear fellow——"

This remark was made by Clifford; for his comrade was so absorbed in looking at the occupants of the other boat that he let his own boat go past the bushes without catching hold of them, and had to go right up into the bow to reach them. The boat being stopped short

thus at the bow, its stern was swung round by the current till it came athwart the narrow lock-channel, and the ascending boat ran into it,—slowly, however, and without much force, for the rower in the latter had not had time to get any way on.

“What have you got your blooming boat in the way for?” he cried. “Beg pardon, ladies,” he added, as, turning round, he saw Blanche and her mother sitting just in a line with the bow of his boat; “but it’s all the faults of your gents being so precious clumsy: parties who don’t know how to handle a boat oughtn’t to come out on the river.”

Clifford, who had been trying to get the boat round, using his oar for a pole, on feeling the collision, turned round, and then for the first time his eyes fell on the companion of the speaker. It was his secretary.

His first impulse was to call her by name; but a sudden appealing look from her stopped him. Then she averted her head.

When two boats get jammed in a narrow stream it is not always easy to disengage them; and some little time passed on this occasion before they got clear. During this not another word was spoken. Clifford was speechless from astonishment; and Burrard, usually so talkative, preserved perfect silence: the sculler in the other boat, possibly abashed by his reception, said nothing more; but after he had got clear, and was rowing out of the channel into the river, Clifford heard him say, “Now then, Hilda, my girl, look out where you are steering to: you will have us into the bank again if you don’t take care.”

“Silence is the only language to employ with gentlemen of that class,” said Burrard, as they alighted on the bank. “’Arry is one of the most admirable products of our

latest civilisation. If this great and free country, now, had a conscription into which ’Arry could be swept, he could be licked into shape and turned to some account; but in the absence of that institution, he must be placed in the same category with the gadfly and the mosquito, whose place in the economy of nature it is difficult to explain. I wonder if the Rocky Mountains will have an ’Arry of its own, a different species of the same genus? Yet ’Arry has doubtless his merits, although unseen by the casual observer. That pretty girl, now, doubtless regards the salutation he greeted us with as the perfection of humorous *badinage*. She *was* a very pretty girl, wasn’t she, Miss Scallan?”

Miss Scallan had hardly noticed her, but thought she was rather pretty.

“I should have called her handsome rather than pretty,” said Mrs Scallan; “she is too thin to be regularly pretty. I fancy I have seen her face before, quite lately. Wasn’t that the girl we noticed at the opera last night, Blanche? that pretty girl with a gentleman in the second tier?”

Miss Blanche, however, could not be brought to remember the pretty girl’s face particularly; and Burrard observed that she must have been sitting rather high up, if accompanied by ’Arry: the gallery would be about ’Arry’s proper form.

“I am sure I have seen her before,” persisted Mrs Scallan, “and quite lately too: I wonder where it was.” But while Clifford was in silent consternation lest she should recollect the meeting of the previous afternoon, her attention was happily diverted by the appearance of a man crossing the lock-bridge and coming towards them, bearing a large basket, which was found to contain a tea-equipage, with wood and shavings for a fire.

"Did I not say he was a regular Monte Cristo, this Clifford?" cried Burrard, as they spread the things on the grass. "See what it is not to be a younger son."

"He is indeed," said Blanche, graciously.

"And doubtless," continued the other, "with a mysterious Zaidee in the recesses of the Alexandra Mansions."

As he said this lightly, Burrard looked at Blanche, and the two exchanged a glance of intelligence; while Clifford, who had not yet recovered his self-possession after the meeting with Hilda, became still more confused. His cousin had never alluded to what she had seen on the day of her visit to the Mansions, and he had almost forgotten the incident. Could it be that she and Burrard had exchanged confidences on the subject? This seemed unlikely, and yet it was hardly possible to put a different construction on their looks.

"Who is Monty—what did you call him?" asked Mrs Scallan.

"The Count of Monte Cristo?" replied Burrard; "the greatest of swells and most refined of hosts until our present entertainer appeared on the scene."

"I never even heard of him. Have we ever met him, Blanche?"

Blanche did not reply; and her mother, knowing that she did not like to hear the confessions of being unacquainted with the leaders of London fashion, which the elder and more artless lady was apt to let fall unguardedly, did not press for a reply. Mrs Scallan was in great spirits. She had never seen Blanche behave so nicely before, and supposing her nephew to be very close in money matters, it was an agreeable surprise to find him conducting the entertainment in such liberal fashion. She would not do anything to mar the harmony of the day by pursuing a line

of conversation which might be disagreeable to her daughter.

The man who brought the teabasket asked if he should stay and light the fire; but Blanche declared that this was her function, although eventually that, and the boiling of the kettle thereon, were effected by Burrard, whose Aldershot experiences came in usefully. Blanche, however, was at least able to pour out the tea, and cut the bread-and-butter; and as she knelt on the grass engaged in these operations, Clifford thought he had never seen her look so fascinating. He would have liked to prolong the meal, but observing that his aunt was beginning to yawn, he mentioned that a carriage was in waiting close by the lock, which would take them to Rainham in time to catch a quick train to town.

"Unquestionably the incarnation of Monte Cristo," again cried Burrard, and they set off at once. They were all tired, and in the train the conversation rather languished. Indeed, Mrs Scallan, who was not used to be so much in the open air, had an uneasy nap all the way up to town, her sense of propriety keeping her from leaning back comfortably, so that her head was constantly dropping forward and recovering itself.

"We have had a delightful day, I am sure," she said, waking up as the train stopped at the platform for collecting tickets. "You have treated us quite like a prince, Robert, and everything has gone off so well."

"There is always one drawback to an excursion which ends in a railway journey," said Clifford, by way of turning the conversation from himself: "you have to come through these wretched suburbs in order to get back to town. Their squalor has a most depressing action on the spirits—at least that is their effect on me. I can never

get reconciled to it, often as I pass through."

"There ought to be no suburbs," observed Burrard. "London should be cut short about the Victoria Station, and an embargo laid on the building of shabby houses."

"The shabby houses are wanted for poor people to live in, I suppose," said Blanche.

"But I would have no poor people either. Poor people are a mistake, in my opinion, although I belong to the class."

"Ah, if we could only extirpate poverty," cried Clifford. "But the first step must be to get rid of the dirt and squalor in which they are forced to live."

"We must have some poor people, I suppose," observed the young lady, "or else how should we get our work done for us?"

"Working classes, of course, there must be, Blanche; but perhaps a time may come when they will all be fairly comfortable, and as happy as the rich. I was thinking of the real poor,—the unfortunates who can't work, or can't find work. You have no idea, too, how much the want of decent house accommodation is responsible for the vice and misery there is in London. If you were only to see the way in which these poor wretches are forced to live."

"Oh, but I don't want to see it; it is bad enough to hear you talk about it."

Clifford made no answer. Had his cousin been less beautiful he would probably have felt disgust. As it was, he endeavoured to console himself by reflecting that her mode of bringing up accounted for her thoughtless way of regarding these things. Perhaps when she became his wife she would look at life more seriously. Yes, there was no doubt now that this radiant

creature was destined to be his. That must be certain, or she would not have come on the excursion to-day. It now only remained for him to declare himself formally. The proceedings must be taken to denote a provisional agreement between them. He was too modest and diffident not to see she was not in love with him, although she was prepared to accept him for a husband; but perhaps the love might come after marriage. Yet while this conviction brought a sense of rapture and elation, nevertheless her late remarks and the episode about the society papers came back to his recollection, and jarred unpleasantly on his feelings.

The party broke up at Waterloo. Mrs Scallan invited the gentlemen to come home to dinner, but not very heartily, divining that Blanche would like to be now alone. Burrard pleaded an engagement; and Clifford had the good sense to feel that it would be better not to spoil the good effect of the day's entertainment by prolonging it, so declined the invitation also.

"She is more fascinating than ever, the little cousin," said Burrard, as the two gentlemen walked away from the station after seeing the ladies drive off in a cab. "If I were not a poor younger son, to whom such luxuries as matrimony are denied, I should feel tempted to become your rival, and fall in love with her myself. You are a lucky fellow."

Clifford would have liked to show offence at this, but the other's manner made it difficult to express resentment. Burrard was very pressing that he should dine with him at one of his clubs, but Clifford declined the invitation, and went home to spend the evening over his books, although he had but little sense of what he was reading.

KING GEORGE THE THIRD AND MR FOX IN THEIR EARLY DAYS.

WHEN it was announced that the world was to be presented with another history of Charles James Fox, and that this was to be the history of his early days, to the lips of very many among us rose one and the same observation. "We have been told already," it was said, "all that it imports us to know concerning Mr Fox; the account of his early life is not likely to edify any of us, or to improve his reputation: so few of his days were devoted to the duties of administration, that his phase in history is rather that of one revolving about those who controlled the destinies of this kingdom, than of one who himself directed them." Men who spoke thus did not forget that Mr Fox was a man of exceptionally brilliant abilities, and of a disposition such as endeared him to a large circle whom he chose for friends and acquaintances. As long as any of them who had personally known him survived, it was quite to be expected that they would receive with pleasure, and fondly treasure up, every relic of his genius, and every friendly revival of the scenes in which they and he had moved. But more than two generations have passed away since Fox was consigned with all honour to his tomb in Westminster Abbey. Personal interest in the gifted man must have died out. And hence it is that so many have asked, "Why are we to have a new history of the youth of Charles James Fox?" The mere possession of great abilities does not generally give the owner a long entail of interest among posterity, unless

those abilities may have borne fruit. Now, although the abilities were in Mr Fox's case exceptionally great, the fruit of them, most men will now say, was remarkably small.

Howbeit, it has appeared to Mr George Otto Trevelyan expedient to write once again the history of Fox's youth; and there be many in the world of letters who have hailed the appearance of his work with approval and satisfaction. The author and his admirers do not at any rate regard another history as supererogatory. Ask we why? The reason appears to be that Mr Fox is now accepted as the great father and apostle of modern Whiggism, which again is accepted as a supreme blessing. The study of Mr Fox is therefore accounted much the same as the study of Whig doctrines: the story of the famous exemplar may rouse in ingenuous breasts devotion to the great political precepts of which Mr Fox here appears as the embodiment.

But we should write invidiously were we to assign no other reason than the above (although we esteem that the principal one) why the book has found in many quarters a cordially kind reception. It has been said to be written with great ability, in a charming style—to be full of profound wisdom and sparkling anecdote—to throw new light upon the political period which was that of Mr Fox's youth—to present to us a vivid picture of the manners of that time. Merit, one sees, of a high order is thus claimed for it. How far it possesses the quali-

ties ascribed is the question which we propose now to examine.

The book, which embraces the period from Fox's birth in 1749 to his dismissal from office in 1774, might with propriety have been entitled 'The History of King George the Third in the first Fifteen Years of his Reign, and of the Early Life of the Honourable Charles James Fox;' for certainly the King figures in it as prominently as Mr Fox. And, as indicative of the teaching of the volume, there might have appeared upon the title-page, by way of motto, an inversion of a Scriptural principle, thus: *A corrupt tree can bring forth good fruit, and a good tree can bring forth evil fruit.* For it is to illustrate at some length such an inverted proverb that Mr Trevelyan appears to have written.

Let us admit at once that the author has brought his examples on the scene with much candour. We cannot say that he has many things extenuated in drawing the portrait of Mr Fox; or that, in describing the daily life of King George the Third in his youth, he has set down aught in malice. Mr Fox, *teste* Trevelyan, was as great a profligate as he could well be—a precocious profligate, a thoroughly unprincipled young man, socially and politically. King George III., according to the same authority, was a model of moral propriety, singularly free from the vices of his time, most diligent in business—a man who professed always to act from conscientious motives, whose courage and firmness in difficult situations were simply heroic. It is by his inferences and deductions that the historian essays to prove his proposition—and that proposition is, that Mr Fox was an unspeakable blessing to this country; while the King was little short of a curse to her, and by

his wickedness, hypocrisy, and discouragement of all that was ennobling in politics, "mutilated the empire, loaded the nation with debt, reduced the military reputation of Britain lower than it ever stood before or since, made formidable inroads upon freedom, and rendered the crown itself so irksome a burden that its wearer thought very seriously of resigning it." The author, as we are convinced, believes firmly in every opinion that he puts forward, and feels that others cannot choose but hold them too; though many, nevertheless, may be disposed to doubt. The manner in which, all through the book, the author's favourite views are treated as axioms, savours much of fanaticism. Thus strong in his faith, Mr Trevelyan scorns to put much gloss on the facts of his history. While passionately admiring Mr Fox, he makes him but a sorry figure; while denouncing George III. as strongly as Junius or Fox himself, and more strongly than Wilkes, he is ever showing us what admirable, what kingly qualities adorned the man! The opinions are the opinions of Mr Trevelyan, but the portraits are the portraits of a truthful limner. Our only wonder is at the strength of the prejudice which prevented the author from falling away from his faith as he collected and arranged his matter.

From what we have said, it may be understood that we shall be able to examine Mr Trevelyan's teaching without travelling far beyond the boards of his book. If we have to call witnesses from outside, it will be some whom Mr Trevelyan has studied, if not quoted, and some with whom students of the history of last century must be familiar. So, without further preface, let us bring Mr Fox on the scene by quoting from page 200 of our subject:—

"Horace Walpole, who had a grudge against Lord Holland and all that belonged to him, bears reluctant testimony to the impression produced upon the old stagers of the Commons by the appearance in their midst of one who was born a debater as Buonaparte was born a general."

Readers must not suppose (as, according to the text, they fairly might) that Walpole made the comparison at the end of the sentence. He did not live to see Napoleon's glory, and never, that we know of, mentioned him. The comparison must be Mr Trevelyan's own; and, confused though the sentence may be in which it stands, we believe it to be a true and apt comparison. Mr Fox was born a debater of the very first class. A boyish fondness for private acting contributed, no doubt, to the shaping and early exercise of his talent, and accustomed him to the sound of his own voice; but his gift was a natural one,—he had no need to train for a senator—his oratory never smelt of the lamp. On whichever side of a question he might speak (and in his early days he often chose his side from mere wantonness), he knew the art of impressing his hearers and holding them enchained; of investing a trite subject with a new and commanding interest; of influencing opinion by the mysterious power of the tongue and of the orator's craft auxiliary to the tongue. All authorities concur in ascribing the wonderful talent of speaking, of which he was so unthrifty a steward, to Mr Fox. There can be little doubt that his disposition towards his relations, friends, and associates was kind and gentle, or that he was the wittiest and most attractive of companions. Indeed his personal fascination must have been excessively potent, since it served to cover, with his familiars, the multitude of his vices, and still

tempts Mr Trevelyan and others (who never felt the glamour, but who like imitation of the sentiment) to write, and no doubt to be affected, like his boon companions. "Poor Charles Fox!" writes our author, as if he had won ten thousand from him and got drunk with him the night before.

This magazine is printed not so far from the town of Ayr but that we can entirely recognise the affection which is born of compotation. We remember that

"Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither;
They had been fou for weeks thegither."

We do not doubt that Fox was loved as a "vera brither,"—as an elder and a leading brother, "the tutor and the feeder of their riots,"—by his *compagnons de bouteille*; but the long-descended echo of the note of brotherhood, uttered at this time of day, is what Sir Hugh Evans calls "affectations."

Fox had the gift of being able to master easily most studies which he liked. He was fond of literature, and by his attention thereto stored his mind with knowledge and imagery. He was a good linguist, and spoke and wrote French fluently. We believe that we have now stated all that Mr Trevelyan places to the credit side of Fox's character—nay, there is one other quality, attributed on the very best evidence, but about which we have always felt a little puzzled. It seems that he did many things, small as well as great, well. He himself accounted for this by saying that "he was always a painstaking man," and his admirers have echoed the saying. But we believe more firmly in the immense natural ability than in the pains, and for this reason—a really painstaking man will give his mind to the pursuit which chiefly engrosses him. The main pursuit of the young Fox

was gambling; and by all accounts Fox's great losses are referred not so much to ill-fortune as to advantages which were taken of him, and to his neglect of honourable and ordinary means of self-defence. Now a gambler generally plays to win: if he allows himself to be a loser where he might fairly have won with a little more attention and pains, he is not, as far as his game is concerned, a painstaking man.

"Charles Fox," so Mr Trevelyan tells us—and we quite believe him—"began his political course utterly unprovided with any fixed set of political opinions. Older than his years in nothing but his looks and his opportunities, his outfit for the career of a statesman consisted in a few superficial prejudices, the offspring rather of taste than of conviction; a few personal alliances which he had formed for himself; and not a few personal dislikes, which he had for the most part inherited from his father."* We incline to think that as his outfit, so was his stock-in-trade, to the end of his days, "the offspring rather of taste" (and of rivalry) "than of conviction." So far as conviction was concerned, Mr Fox might have settled into any groove, and would certainly have made a great figure therein: the chapter of accidents decided for him that he should be the father of modern Whiggism; although we, who do not profess to understand the mysteries of that awful faith, perceive passages in his later career which do not make for the affiliation. But Whigs are wise; we bow to their wisdom; and consider the paternity as settled.

The young adventurer seems to have fallen upon a House of Com-

mons so mediocre in talent, that he, a mere lad, felt himself to be easily a chief there. How he disported himself, leviathan-wise, therein; how he thought proper to take the wrong side—of course we mean the side of which modern Whigs do not approve—in the great Wilkes discussions; how he used such dreadful language as that "the contest lay between all that was respectable on the one side, and the lowest scum of Billingsgate and Wapping on the other;"† how he took office twice in Lord North's Administration,—we are told once more in these pages. We are also told how, all through his early history, he was a most determined gambler,—how he sat for exhausting periods at the gaming-table, and how he lost incredible sums. His vices, as we are assured by his latest biographer, were simply those of his age. They were so; but the degree in which he exhibited them was something above that of the age. Witness an account given by Walpole, who had recently heard him speak.

"Fox was dissipated, dissolute, idle beyond measure. He was that very morning returned from Newmarket, where he had lost some thousand pounds the preceding day. He had stopped at Hockerel, where he found company; had sat up drinking all night; and had not been in bed when he came to move his Bill, which he had not even drawn up. This was genius—was almost inspiration."

When we have made all allowance for the dislike of the Fox family which Mr Trevelyan imputes to Walpole, far too much of what is disreputable will remain in Charles Fox's habits as here sketched. And Walpole is not a solitary wit-

* P. 146.

† This blasphemy appears to have been forgotten when Mr Fox became the "Man of the People."

ness, but unhappily is fully supported by other writers of the period. Gibbon, writing to Mr Holroyd on February 8, 1772, says: "Fox prepared himself for that holy war* by passing twenty-two hours in the pious exercise of hazard; his devotions cost him only about £500 per hour—in all, £11,000." Mr Trevelyan, writing of this same discussion, says:—

"Everybody who got a hearing on that occasion spoke above himself, except Charles Fox. During the four days and nights that surrounded the debate, he was only once in bed; he must have drunk a dozen of wine; and, at one moment, he had lost as many thousands of pounds."†

If there had been any part of Mr Fox's after-life which might be said to "unbecome the promise of his spring," we might be content to overlook the vices of the first half of his career, and might turn with thankful relief to his days of probity and virtue. But there was no reformation; as was his early life, so was his manhood. Old age he never reached; neither could it be expected that he would do so. As a specimen of what his morals were when he was at the meridian of his life, there remains to us the sad recollection of his celebrated *Coalition* with Lord North. Only a few months before the Coalition was formed, he had said publicly that if he should ever make terms with any member of Lord North's Administration, he would "rest satisfied to be called the most infamous of mankind." And he had denounced that Administration as men "who, in every public and private transaction, as Ministers, had shown themselves void of every

principle of honour and honesty." Moreover, he had spoken of the *scaffold* as the possible and deserved termination of North's career.

Our author cites with *gusto* a maxim of Burke to this effect:—

"The principles of true politics are those of morality enlarged; and I neither now do, nor ever will, admit of any other." This affords an easy rule for forming an estimate of Mr Fox's opinions as to public matters: we see how much he had of morality; and we may calculate how much he had of "true politics." Indeed, so little had he to recommend him except his unequalled power of speaking, and his natural amiability in society, that many of his contemporaries who did not rank among his personal acquaintance are reported to have expressed their surprise that a man of such libertine manners could exert so extended and so remarkable an influence. But, an objector once brought under the spell of his oratory, forthwith became spell-bound, and ceased to marvel at the subjugation of others by the same charm.‡ It is of course matter of speculation how Fox might have acquitted himself had his eloquence landed him where their eloquence lands so many—that is, at the head of a Government. The creed of Britons clearly is, that a great speaker must necessarily make a great ruler; and they do not hesitate to intrust all their interests as citizens to men who can charm them with their tongues, often egregiously overestimating the practical abilities of their chosen. They erred thus in regard to the late Lord Brougham; and we fancy we may point to another instance,

* Concerning subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles.

† P. 442.

‡ Pitt was once asked by a foreigner how a nation so moral as the British could submit to be governed by so profligate a man as Fox. The answer was, "You have never been under the wand of the magician."

not very far off, in which our countrymen will bitterly regret their entertainment of the fallacy that great facility of talking means great ability to govern. Of a truth, it is one thing to utter fine sentiments, to grind morals, to denounce adversaries; and entirely another thing to keep in motion and to guide with success the great machine of Government.

Until recently, when Fox's times began to fade into the calm expanse of the past, and journals and biographies appearing at intervals, as actors left the stage, reilluminated for brief spaces particular incidents and epochs, he lay under some injurious imputations from which his memory is now relieved. It was believed that, to help the Prince of Wales out of one of his difficulties, Fox had disingenuously assured the House of Commons that no marriage of the Prince to Mrs Fitzherbert had ever taken place. But it has of late years been shown that Fox in this matter was more sinned against than sinning. He said only what he firmly believed to be the truth; but he had been deceived by his Royal familiar and co-reveller. Again, on Mr Fox's shoulders was laid the burden of having caused the Prince of Wales to take up a political position of hostility to the Court; but it would now appear that Fox's influence had been exerted, though vainly, in the other direction, and that he had advised his Royal Highness against this unfilial proceeding.

Of the intimacy between the Prince of Wales and Mr Fox much has been said and written. Mr Fox, who was the elder of the pair by thirteen years, has been blamed for making a rake and a *vaurien* of the heir to the throne—no light charge against one for whom the credit of *patriotism* is claimed. On the other hand, it is alleged that

the Prince, when he admitted Mr Fox to familiarity with him, was already so accomplished in profligacy, that the most Fox could do for him was to keep his head straight towards perdition,—he could teach him nothing. The King prayed, "Heaven send the Prince a better companion;" but Fox may have replied, "Heaven send the companion a better prince. I cannot rid my hands of him." It is only too probable that they were birds of a feather, and that they formed a mutual debasement association. It is difficult, however, to understand how a statesman of over thirty years of age could, if he ever thought at all about the weal of his country, deliberately encourage the heir-apparent to the crown in wickedness and vice. Indeed it is to be inferred that Fox's contemporaries took a very different view of his patriotism from that which modern Whigs desire to be received. Gibbon, writing of him in 1772, says: "Charles Fox is commenced patriot, and is already attempting to pronounce the words *country, liberty, corruption, &c.*; with what success time will discover." It is evident that Gibbon regarded the alliance between Fox and patriotism as a mere *mariage de convenance*.

And we call to remembrance a very ugly passage in Earl Russell's Memorials, which must be considered to have been penned in much irritation, engendered by disappointment and defeat, or else to be strong evidence against Fox's patriotism. In the year 1801 he is reported to have written as follows to Earl Grey, who had taken exception to some strong language which Fox had used in public:—

"I am gone something farther in hate to the English Government than perhaps you and the rest of my friends are, and certainly farther than can with prudence be avowed. The tri-

umph of the French Government over the English does in fact afford me a degree of pleasure which it is very difficult to disguise."*

Mr Trevelyan has cautioned us against Walpole's prejudice; but while we are considering Mr Fox's character, let us look at this picture of him in his lodgings, taking it for what it is worth:—

"Fox lodged in St James's Street, and as soon as he rose, which was very late, had a levee of his followers, and of the members of the Gaming Club, at Brooks's, all his disciples. His bristly black person, and shagged breast quite open, and rarely purified by any ablutions, was wrapped in a foul linen night-gown, and his bushy hair dishevelled. In these cynic weeds, and with epicurean good-humour, did he dictate his politics; and in this school did the heir of the crown attend his lessons and imbibe them. Fox's followers, to whom he had never enjoined Pythagorean silence, were strangely licentious in their conversation about the King. At Brookes's they proposed wagers on the duration of his reign."

This is a forbidding sketch; but the contemplation of it only causes one more and more to appreciate the gifts which could make Fox's companions blind to the defects here portrayed, as well as to other and greater ones, and which could attach to him a band of ardent admirers. Why the man was to be pitied, one is at a loss to discover; yet there were, in his set, many who would exclaim, with a better grace and less artificial wail than Mr Trevelyan, "Poor Charles Fox!" It would have been edifying to learn from these feeling persons what his misfortunes were. To us he seems to have been born one of Nature's and Fortune's particular favourites. He had health and spirits; talent to overflowing; kind, admiring, and indulgent parents and relations; a

position among the greatest in the land; money, leisure, and a genial nature that could appreciate and enjoy all these goods. Before his father died he had made away with upwards of a hundred thousand pounds, and Lord Holland had paid the money. Poor Charles Fox indeed! But stay; there is a sense in which Mr Fox was an object of pity, though we believe it is not the sense in which Mr Trevelyan would make him so. Inasmuch as he misapplied transcendent talent, lavished on vices great means, and misspent a life which might have been lived for the good of others, and for his own welfare and fame, we may point to him as Poor Charles Fox!

It will be perceived that we do not regard Mr Fox's career through Whig spectacles—that medium which can always whiten the multitude of sins in one of their own fraternity. We see only that, in portraying his subject as he was in his early days, Mr Trevelyan has drawn a character very vicious and very unprincipled. Might we not then, it may be said, have refrained from the contemplation of a figure which is so little to our taste? nay, rather, might not Mr Trevelyan have refrained from reopening the cerements of Charles Fox, and again exhibiting his sins and follies?

Bad, however, as it is to make a hero of a very wicked and an almost useless man, it is still worse to hold up to contempt and disapprobation a man of pure morals, guileless life, and constant sense of responsibility for all his acts. As we have already admitted, Mr Trevelyan ascribes some very high qualities to King George III.; but he would have his readers believe what, as we feel assured, he has taught

* Vol. iii. p. 349.

himself firmly to believe—namely, that whatever inclination to or aptitude for good, nature or education had given to the King, was entirely marred and cancelled by a disposition perverse, a mind obtuse, a desire unpatriotic, bigoted, and imperious. It was to be expected that a writer of this latter end of the nineteenth century would be a little more clearly informed, a little less partial, than men of a hundred years ago. Most writers of the present day no doubt are so. They have taken to heart the large contributions to history which have been born of the press during the last sixty years, and have purified their minds from the mist and prejudice which beset all accounts of exalted personages in their own day. They no longer look to the gossip of a hundred years ago, to the guesses and inventions of the periodical press of that period, to the savage accusations of political malcontents and mob-orators, or to the quieter scandal which was whispered about with less vicious intention, but with perhaps far more damning effect. They have now, as to most Cabinet incidents of the early reign of George III., direct and authentic evidence, the effect of which has been to dispel false beliefs and wrong inferences, to show the other sides of questions which had for long been seen only in unchanging half views, to tone down the virulence of party, to unveil the springs of action, and to give us an insight into the whole state of circumstances which surrounded the throne in Mr Fox's youth. But Mr Trevelyan has stuck fast in the slough of the eighteenth century; an age has passed for him in vain. He is informed exactly with the spirit which must have animated many members of Brooks's Club in the days which he has taken such pains

to revive, and which he in many cases amusingly describes. He might be, so far as his information goes, fresh from the perusal of a letter of Junius, or a squib of Churchill, on the morning of publication, or from hearing Wilkes or Fox denounce the tyranny of his day. He has allowed even the slow Tories to outstrip him in, at any rate, historical progress. While all the world has been advancing into a better atmosphere, he has been unable to turn away from the old fire and brimstone of party war; he has looked back lovingly on the smoke which ascended in the past; he has let go the hands that would have guided him; and has become a pillar in the desert of fanaticism. He,

“ 'Midst the general flight
Stands like the red moon on some stormy
night
Among the fugitive clouds which, hurry-
ing by,
Leave only her unshaken in the sky.”

But most of us are in another and a better stage of information. We are clear of the mists, and calumnies, and guesses, and party scurrilities, and inventions of an age ago, and can see some of the actions of that time far more truly than could many who were then alive. Those contemporaries who alone knew the truth did not speak to their own generation; but, being dead, they yet speak to ours by the documents which they have left behind them. Those who could not know the truth, boldly, recklessly, and infamously propagated slanders wherewith the minds of nine-tenths of the realm were poisoned, and whereby the good name of one of the best men and most patriotic kings that ever sate on a throne was for many years most foully maligned. Suppose we take such a review as our space admits of, of the beliefs current in those

days, and cherished and circulated by Mr Trevelyan in these days, and of the testimony which the pages of history bear now, and will hereafter bear.

King George III. ascended his throne when he was in his twenty-third year. His youth had been passed in a seclusion such as seldom falls to the lot of an heir to the crown of Great Britain. He was understood to have imbibed most of his opinions and sentiments from his mother, the Princess-Dowager of Wales, and from Lord Bute, who was Groom of the Stole to him while he was heir-apparent. Fortunately these opinions and sentiments were honourable and moral, such as became a king; but the Princess, as regarded government, was understood to hold that a monarch should personally exercise considerable influence in State affairs. The young king did aspire to make his influence felt in public business, but for reasons which were highly to his credit.

The Court society of that day is described by our author in his history, and has been depicted by hundreds of writers beside. Without one exception, as we believe, they have all shown it to have been in the main scandalously licentious. Its manners, acts, and language were such that a large part of what was practised, done, and said, cannot now be set before the general reader. This was one evil which the King saw under the sun, and with which he dared to cope. Again, the methods of government followed by Ministers of State were for the most part corrupt and immoral. Few and far between were some high-minded men who would not stoop to corruption and immorality themselves, yet who winked at these things when done by their colleagues. These vices in statecraft also grieved the mind of the

young sovereign, and, in his inexperience, he thought that, by his power honestly exerted, he might put them down. But, like many another unpractised enthusiast, he reckoned without regard to the strong and spreading roots by which evil holds its ground. Confident in his integrity, he thought he had but to will and to reform; he was to learn that, armed only with his sling and his stone, he, a ruddy youth, was no match for the giant power, panoplied in party and patronage, which stood up for the reign of oligarchy, and cursed him by its gods.

The great Whig families of England had contrived to appropriate to themselves all the power of the kingdom. They, among themselves, formed administrations; they retained all patronage in their hands; they monopolised the control of public moneys—and Mr Trevelyan is as ready as any one to admit how scandalous was their disposal of these revenues as regarded pensions, bribes, and what the wise called “balances.” One or two men with brains, and a train of other men with good stomachs, a grand capacity for liquor, and a love of all other sensualities, made up an administration. They recognised the Crown only as a convenient factor in their method of governing the country, not as a power in the State. Their theory was, that the sovereign should be a mere *fainéant*, the most submissive of instruments in their hands, not daring to act, to speak, or even to think, but as they should direct or permit. Walpole said they regarded power as the Hebrews did their priesthood, and thought it ought to be confined to one tribe. It was with a faction like this that the youthful George III., when he first tried his strength, found himself in collision. The battle was

so unequal as to appear hopeless for him, so desperate as more than once to have proved all but beyond his strength, so agonising as to make him at times weary of his life. But the King had constancy and courage; he was thwarted, insulted, humiliated even to the dust, yet he rose again like a Titan; the contest extended over years, but he endured and resisted, and finally triumphed. This is his unpardonable sin. He beat the Whigs; wrested from them their monopoly of power and patronage and speculation; emancipated his country and his sceptre from their blighting conspiracies; and scattered them into aimless cliques and railing revolutionists—a condition from which they did not raise their heads for half a century.

Finding that the King would not be *their* puppet, Ministers made him unpopular by declaring that he was the puppet of others. They averred that there existed a tender connection between the Princess-Dowager and the Earl of Bute—a scandal which to this day they have never substantiated; and they asserted that his Majesty, after the short-lived Ministry of Lord Bute resigned office, was privately swayed in all matters of State by these two personages; that while pretending to put faith in, and to govern through, his ostensible Ministers, he was perpetually plotting against them and ruining their policy for the gratification of his mother and her admirer. Everything that went wrong was laid to the charge of this back-stairs influence. In vain the King assured them that there was no influence behind the throne, and that any opinion which he might offer independent of their advice and plans proceeded from himself alone. They disbelieved, or affected to disbelieve, his assertions, and insulted him with

reflections on his mother's character and his own truth and faith; and, having thus galled and disgusted him, they protested that there must be some secret and illicit influence countermining them, as, in spite of their universally obsequious and considerate conduct towards him, he evidently did not like them, and disapproved of many things which they moved him to do.

The ruler of whom the Whigs said such cruel and unwarrantable things was very differently regarded by persons who had opportunities of observing him in his private life. Mrs Montagu, in one of her letters, writes:—

“There is a decency and dignity in his character that could not be expected at his years; mildness and firmness mixed; religious sentiments and a moral conduct unblemished; application to business; affability to every one; no bias to any particular party or faction; sound and serious good sense in conversation; and an elevation of thought and tenderness of sentiment. There hardly passes a day in which one does not hear of something he has said or done, which raises one's opinion of his understanding and heart.”

But the King's virtues were the cause of his being unable for a time to silence calumny. Could his people have witnessed his innocent, domestic, and religious life, no slanderer could have had power to poison their minds against him. Unfortunately, however, the seclusion in which he lived left them without visible evidence, and gave opportunities to the false tongues which worked in darkness. King George believed that if he would acquit himself religiously and honestly of his duties towards his subjects, he must labour elsewhere than in the field of politics. The moral condition of at any rate the higher and wealthier classes (and we refer to Mr Trevelyan's book those who

wish to know what that condition was) was such as he could not, and did not, countenance. He determined to exert an influence in regions to which laws would not reach; he sought to work a change in morals and sentiments; and, in order to do this, he made his Court a model of propriety, lived a virtuous and religious life, and sought the society of high-principled and respectable persons. His quiet, temperate, virtuous career was in itself a reproach to the evil livers who composed the great world. They bitterly resented the good living of the King and Queen and their Court; and, as they could find no flaw in regard to society, they invented the grossest imputations as to the exercise of the kingly office. The people did not yet know that the high principles and lively conscience of the King, his constant sense of a divine oversight of all his acts, rendered impossible the hideous wickednesses which were imputed to him. To discountenance vice and profligacy in those days compelled a man—more especially a young man—to withdraw very much from public life. Hence the busy world saw but little of what the King really did, and it heard a great deal of, and judged him by, what the King did *not*. In proof of his integrity we will cite a passage from Mr Jesse's *Memoirs*, part of which passage is copied from the 'Quarterly Review,' vol. cv. p. 490.* It refers to a period of the year 1788, when the King's mind was temporarily deranged, and is as follows:—

"The most striking features of his painful malady were the never-failing evidences of purity of mind and goodness of heart, which gleamed through the mist which obscured his intellect. It was observed by Colonel Digby,

who was constantly for hours with him in his sick-chamber, that the highest panegyric that could be formed of his character would not equal what in those moments showed itself; that, with his heart and mind entirely open, not one wrong idea appeared; that all was benevolence, charity, rectitude, love of his country, and anxiety for its welfare."

How entirely improbable is it that such a man could be insincere, unpatriotic, or selfishly ambitious!

We have mentioned already the scandal which underlay all the other scandals—namely, that his Majesty was simply a tool in the hands of the Princess-Dowager and Lord Bute, who incited him to grasp at autocratic power, to persecute individuals, to make savage wars, to restrict the press, to tyrannise over his own subjects, and to bestow all his favour upon Scotchmen. Our space does not permit us to cite all the authorities required for the refutation of this Bute *bête noire* which was so cleverly and unscrupulously paraded by the angry Whigs; but we recommend those who desire to see the case fairly handled to consult the eighteenth chapter and the pages *passim* of Jesse's 'Memoirs' already referred to. There the King is cleared of this monstrous charge, and the authorities are given on which the acquittal is founded. The truth is, that the King, who in all things thought first of his duty to his people, withdrew from intimacy with his mother when he became aware of the discontents which her supposed influence over him had caused; and as for Lord Bute, he, at times when he was accused of misleading the King—of setting him to counter-plot against his own Ministers, and to commit errors, iniquities, and even crimes—is now known not to

* Jesse's *Memoirs of the Life and Reign of George III.* (ed. 1867), vol. iii. p. 59.

have maintained even the very slightest communication with his sovereign. But nobody was allowed to believe in Bute's alienation from the Court. He was made a scapegoat by the Whigs, and, deny as he would, his life was rendered miserable by the unpopularity which he incurred in consequence of a favouritism which he had long ceased to enjoy. Lord Brougham, in his '*Statesmen of the Time of George III.*,' wrote thus of the King: "No one could ever charge him with ruling by favourites; still less could any one, by pretending to be the people's choice, impose himself on his vigorous understanding. He had intimate friends, with whom much of his time was passed, but they were under his influence in all things, and influenced him in none."

The King was eminently courageous and constant: these qualities must be kept in view by all who would understand what parts of the political acts of his day were attributable to him. Those acts were all in the main the acts of Ministers, and many of them were ill-advised and unjust. In most cases the King saw them to be objectionable, and opposed them; but, when once overruled and induced to begin, he refused to draw back on the first sign of failure. He would not have done those acts at all; but, having been forced into them, he would not retreat at the first whisper of danger, as his pusillanimous Ministers were sometimes inclined to do. It will be found that this was really the manner in which, principally, the royal influence was exerted. In the long struggle of the House of Commons with Wilkes, in the parliamentary doings and the riots concerning the reporting of members' speeches, and in the prosecution of the American war, the King had been slow to enter into these con-

tests—his native sagacity showing him that no advantage was to be gained from them; but when he had once crossed swords, he would not give in until the quarrel had been fought out. His maxim seems to have been,

"Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel; but being in,
Bear it that the opposer may beware of
thee."

It would seem that the King was alive, as much as man could be, to the truth which Mr Trevelyan cites from Burke, and which we quoted from Mr Trevelyan a little above—viz., "The principles of true politics are those of morality enlarged." Placed behind the scenes, he was shocked to find how little of morality, and therefore how little of true politics, was discoverable in the leading men of the time, such as Mr Trevelyan has described them. He endeavoured to find moral men in whose hands to place the affairs of the kingdom; and, in so doing, he would seem to have drawn from the above proposition a deduction which experience of the world soon proves to be fallacious—he fancied that an honest will and a pure mind combined were capable of holding their ground against talents leagued with qualities which make vice plausible and attractive. His partiality to Lords Bute and North seems to have been founded on his opinion of their integrity; but they failed him lamentably as rulers, and Bute's principles gave way under the pressure of responsibility when, in his political distress, he consented to retain office a little longer by the infamous alliance which he formed with Mr Fox's father. Indeed the King himself was often in difficulties, and driven to pitiable shifts by his ingenuous reliance on the rectitude of his conduct, and his consequent indifference to the arts by which, in

the present state of the world, it is alone possible to govern men. After his youth had passed it was his good fortune to light upon a minister who, pure in heart and of honest will, was a man of commanding parts, and a master of the art of leading men. When he obtained the younger Pitt for his First Minister, the conditions on which he believed that government should be conducted were satisfied; and he withdrew from constant personal interference in affairs, thus proving how little his exercise of prerogative had proceeded from a love of despotism.

That mistakes were committed in this reign both by the King and by his Ministers we do not for a moment dispute. In what reign are there none? But mistakes, much to be regretted though they be, are distinguishable in history from deliberate perversity and wickedness. George III. paid dearly for his mistakes, and earned his worldly experience by many a bitter cross. But he was patient in his search for the right. He did not labour for a vain recompense; neither was his labour in vain.

Though it tarry, there is, even in this world, sometimes a reward for the righteous. Misunderstood, calumniated, obstructed, at first unsuccessful, the King, by his good life, in course of time impressed the hearts of his people. He lived down his unpopularity. He was recognised as the father as well as the ruler of his country. First respect, and then affection for the man, became the general sentiment; and this grew and blossomed into the most ardent loyalty and the most cordial veneration for the throne. "God save the King" was in the manhood and old age of George III. not merely a formal, or customary, or political expression. It

was the outpouring of the sentiment which, more than any other, filled the national mind. The pulses of all, monarch and subjects, beat entirely in unison. When came the fearful period of the French Revolution, "and the heart of the king was moved, and the hearts of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved by the wind," then it was that King George, and this nation over which he ruled, found the recompense of his earnest endeavour and his blameless life. He had remembered his Creator in the days of his youth; in a corrupt and licentious age, he, specially exposed to temptation, with tools and flatterers about him ready to make easy and to excuse his sins, had preferred to "walk with God;" and, if there be any portion of history wherein can be read the course of the divine direction, it is surely legible in the mercy wherewith God "visited" the throne and the people of King George III. in the day of trouble. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." When allegiance was shaken all over the continent of Europe, when crowns toppled, when religion was trodden under foot, when laws were condemned—when society was dissolved, and anarchy and crime, rapine and misery, overran the prostrate nations—there were peace and loyalty in Great Britain. That which was elsewhere the occasion of disunion only drew all hearts together here;

foreigners furiously raged, and every man slew his brother, but among Englishmen every soul yearned to his countryman, and bade him be of good cheer!

To the King's cool courage, as evinced on many occasions in situations of great danger, Mr Trevelyan does full justice. When he was assailed by mobs, and when he was attacked by maniacs or would-be regicides, those about him could not perceive in his face a change of colour, or the least bodily indication of emotion; and as to his mind, it seemed only to become clearer and more prompt in critical circumstances. He would take no precaution that could possibly be thought to indicate fear. His bitterest enemies were compelled to acknowledge his imperturbable bravery and fortitude. His behaviour at the time of the No-Popery Riots in 1780 has been described with much spirit by Mr Jesse in the second volume of his 'Memoirs.' He says that it was owing to the high moral courage and the personal intrepidity of the King that order and authority were restored so soon as they were. He had endeavoured to infuse some of his own spirit into his Ministers, and into the magistrates of the city, but in vain. They were paralysed by the danger; and at a Council which he summoned, that he might ascertain the strictly legal method of employing force in such an emergency, his Majesty could elicit no clear opinion, the counsel of every one being apparently influenced by timidity and indecision. While they faltered and argued, the city was in the power of a fanatic and furious mob. The sovereign, instead of being advised and fortified by the opinion of his Council, was left to act on his

own responsibility; but his mind and his courage were equal to the occasion.

"If, as he plainly told the Lords of the Privy Council, "they hesitated to give him their advice, he would act without it. He would order his horse to the door, head his Guards in person, and disperse the rioters by force. 'I lament,' he said, 'the conduct of the magistrates; but I can answer for *me*,' laying his hand emphatically on his breast, '*one* who will do his duty.' The evident anguish of mind, and impressive manner in which these words were uttered, are said to have drawn tears from the eyes of several members of the Council."

The King did take vigorous action, and the riots were at length quelled. His unshaken mind saved the capital from a horrible fate.

If we have fairly sketched the character of King George III. (and we appeal to the testimony of his contemporaries, which year by year is being opened up to us, in proof that is just), this was surely a man far above mean artifices, far above petty dissimulations. And yet Mr Trevelyan does not hesitate to impute insincerity to this noble personage, or to describe the high and honourable maxims of government which he announced to his Ministers as his "fine words."* The Whig families would have had the sovereign a mere cipher in their hands. As one of their party said, "He should not be allowed to appoint one of his own footmen." They insulted him to his face, abused him in Parliament, and refused to believe his word. Was it likely that a high-spirited monarch would submit to such indignities tamely? The prerogative and the position of a Ministry were in his time not ascertained and defined to the extent which we recognise in the present day. The struggle was

still going on which led to the *quasi* adjustment of power under which we live; but surely that adjustment is due quite as much to the stand made by the Crown as to the zeal of any statesman for our liberties. We should have been ill quit of the despotism of the Crown if we had exchanged it for the tyranny of an oligarchy.

Another reflection which cannot fail to occur to any one who may have examined the latter witnesses, is this,—with his vigorous mind, his courage, his readiness, and his patience, the King was capable of achieving in politics, or in a rougher field, that which he set his mind to. Had it been his wish to establish despotism, he could and would have done it. That he did nothing of the kind is sure proof that he never meditated such a wrong. His own conscience, his own moderation, were the only real restraining forces; his own modest withdrawal from, and depreciation of, dazzling and specious acts, which might have charmed the multitude, were the true causes of his having had in his lifetime so mean a reputation. He had in him all the making of a hero; had he not cared to be “the Good,” he might have been “the Great.”

When he had done with pride, and rule, and pomp, and was seen a helpless old man, far beyond the power of acting, or of concealing his thoughts or feelings, in what character does he appear during his short period of consciousness? as the embers of a burnt-out tyrant; as the exhausted frame in which injurious aims and evil passions had once been dominant; as the broken instrument which had sounded always the notes of dissimulation and artifice? No; he is the wreck of one—

“Whose heart is warm,
Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine
and whose life
Coincident exhibit lucid proof
That he is honest.”

A passing glance of him as he was in his latter years in Windsor Castle, will, we feel sure, be acceptable to the reader, and we extract the following:—

“It was during one of these intervals of consciousness, in 1814, that the Queen is said to have been accidentally a witness to a most touching scene. Having been apprised that her venerable consort was in a very tranquil and conversible mood, she took the opportunity of paying a visit to his apartment, on entering which she found him seated at the harpsichord, singing a hymn to his own accompaniment. Unhappily, however, the harmony awoke associations which completely overpowered his weakened nerves. Reason, indeed, had reoccupied her throne for a few fleeting seconds, but it was only to arouse him to an agonising sense of his true and terrible condition. Falling upon his knees in that interval, he fervently and pathetically offered up his prayers for his Queen, his children, and his people; concluding with an emphatic supplication that either he might be delivered from his present heavy calamity, or else that he might be accorded strength to submit with patience and resignation to the Divine will. This pathetic scene was closed by his bursting into tears, and then relapsing into his former benighted state.”*

And this is the man whom we are desired to regard as designing the subversion of liberty, as treacherous and hypocritical to his Ministers, and as ready to ruin his country rather than forego an object on which he had set his heart!

We have not space to quote what was said by Lord Malmesbury, Sir Walter Scott, Lord Eldon, and other distinguished men,

* From Jesse, who follows the ‘Gentleman’s Magazine,’ vol. xc. part ii. p. 226.

of the King's upright, honourable, and conscientious career; or to adduce the testimony of those who were about his person as to his domestic virtues. But our emphatic protest do we make against the character of him which has been inscribed in the book before us.

And now we must devote a few columns to the literary qualities of Mr Trevelyan's work. We take some exception to its spirit, which is not so liberal as could be wished; we have been struck with what appear to us to be blemishes in the writing; but we find, nevertheless, much which, in our opinion, is praiseworthy.

First, we will ask any reader whether, in writing of such a man as George III., Mr Trevelyan shows good taste in affirming that "one who, during the best years of his life, had been known as the most wilful and the least prosperous of rulers, came to be remembered as a good, easy man, under whose auspices, as a reward for his virtue, Trafalgar was added to the roll of our victories." The sneer might have passed, sixty years ago; but it is indefensible now, and must recoil upon its author. Indeed for Mr Trevelyan, although he professes to write history, history exists in vain. He can see in the period of the French Revolution little except that it was a bad time for the Whigs; consequently it is to him almost devoid of interest. And there are other instances in which blindness would appear to have fallen upon the historian, of which he is so little conscious that he imagines all the world to be equally blind. For example, he writes thus complacently about the purity of elections, which the Whigs (of course) have secured to us:—

"The grosser scandals which disgraced our elections began steadily, though slowly, to abate from the day when the jurisdiction of a Parliamentary Committee became a terror to evildoers, instead of a machinery which the party in power ruthlessly worked for the purpose of increasing its own majority."*

We know not whether to take this as simplicity or joking: we hope that a slight is not intended on the reader's intelligence. Our author must surely fancy that no one reads the daily newspapers. "Steadily to abate," forsooth!!

It is to be observed that throughout the History the identity of Junius with Sir Philip Francis is taken as proved. The author has a perfect right to hold this opinion; but it is somewhat immodest to assume that, because he believes in the identity, it must be the creed of all of us. We imagine that there are men now living quite as capable of investigating the evidence, and forming an opinion therefrom, as Mr Trevelyan, who are not at all persuaded that Francis was Junius.

We are disposed to agree with those who have pronounced the book to be agreeably written. It does not appear to have been intended to give the latest information that has been afforded to us, but rather to keep our minds steadfast in all the errors of the last age—therefore we must not look for anything new in it: yet the old matter has been pleasantly recast; and if nothing has been added to what was already known concerning Fox, we have at least the advantage here of some spirited pictures of the life in which men of fashion, in the days of Fox's youth, had their part. Anecdotes, culled not without judgment from memoirs and books of gossip,

* P. 257.

are conveniently introduced ; and, as far as it can be done with old, old materials to work upon, we have a well - arranged, readable volume. The style is generally easy, and the stories briefly and effectively told.

But there is one point on which we would like to say a word of caution. Our historian evidently has thought it but a small thing to write gracefully and naturally the story which he had to tell : he has thought it necessary to—(we dare not say *enrich*) his writing with figurative illustration in places ; and in so doing he has certainly acted without self-knowledge and to the detriment of his book. “Thought it necessary” were our words, which we used advisedly—feeling sure that many of the reflections did not offer themselves to the composer’s mind, but were laboriously worked out and inserted under the belief that they might prove ornamental. When we shall have written a little further, we expect that our readers will think as we do on this head.

We are alive as any can be to the power derivable from figurative illustration. We know how, at the end of a page of reasoning or description, one line containing a trope judiciously selected, defines the meaning which was before a little hazy in the outline, or clenches the argument with which our assent had been hitherto coquetting. But in order to be forcible, an illustration must be neat, apt, simple, striking—must in fact, by a familiar and indisputable resemblance, make easy the newly stated or more complex idea. If the figure be wanting in any of the qualities on which we have insisted,—if it be clumsy, far-fetched, or if it fail to fit the subject which should have been its counterpart,—then what reader can withhold his dissatisfaction ? *Risum teneatis, amici ?*

For clearly there was no absolute necessity for resorting to figure at all ; if the writer could not find one that might assist his teaching, he should have kept to his unadorned sentences : it is tampering with a reader’s patience to offer him a so-called illustration which is more obscure than the idea to be illustrated. And hence we may be sure that when a writer’s mind is not sufficiently imaginative to suggest proper and effective analogies, but when, nevertheless, he goes to work with square and rule to construct them, and afterwards drags them into his text by the shoulders, he will convey a greater idea of his ambition than of his wit.

Now let us look at one or two of Mr Trevelyan’s figures, and observe how much they give of beauty or clearness to his thoughts. At page 171 of his History he, alluding to the poet Churchill, makes this remark :—

“Churchill . . . easily and rapidly stormed in his lifetime the citadel of fame ; but he was not of those whose names are engraved upon its bulwarks.”

Storming the citadel of fame, if not a new idea, has nothing objectionable about it except its triteness ; but what are we to think about the engraving of names on its bulwarks ? The engraving, of course, is to be for a perennial testimony ; and that being so, what a place is selected for the engraving ! The bulwarks of a place are certain to be defaced whenever it may be assaulted : the defenders from within will deface them by cutting openings, forming steps, piling stores, or making any other arrangement to serve their purposes ; while the enemy from without will direct his missiles against them, try to batter them down, and certainly obliterate anything that may be engraved thereon ; however deep-

ly cut. Of all the parts of a citadel, the bulwarks are those on which an intelligent person would least think of inscribing any legend which he might wish to endure. The figure therefore, so far as the bulwarks are concerned, is worse than useless, because it not only does not illuminate, but absolutely darkens, the meaning. And of the whole conceit, from the storming to the engraving, we may say that "that which is true is not new, and that which is new is not true."

But let us move on and take another instance. Our author, whose fancy seems to have a martial bent, says in another place when describing the tactics of Junius:—

"Too proud and too shrewd to fatigue or bemire himself by charging into their highly disciplined but faint-hearted ranks, with the true instinct of a polemical strategist he marched straight against the key of the position."

No doubt the true instinct of a "polemical strategist" may often impel him against the key of his enemy's position; but how the deuce he is to go straight at it without charging into the enemy's ranks passes our comprehension. The saying is not happy. The enemy, if not demented (and Mr Trevelyan leaves us to suppose that he is an enemy of at least average understanding), will certainly have multiplied and condensed his ranks about this very key of his position. Ballooning is not yet sufficiently common in warfare to be implied as an ordinary means of attack—moreover, it is not charging; and yet our polemical strategist, without a balloon or the receipt of fern-seed* (for neither is that mentioned), marched straight at the key of his enemy's position

without charging into his ranks, and took it without suffering fatigue or contracting a war-stain. Mr Trevelyan's idea of a strategical position must be, at the least, peculiar. Would it be too presumptuous to say that he has been taking a metaphor from a science of which literally he knows nothing?

But we shall not readily exhaust the curious imagery of the book. The two examples which we gave were of military illustrations—a department wherein the author is not quite at home. The next example will show him dismounted from his war-horse, and on very homely ground, but as obscure, we regret to say, as when, sword in hand, he is charging into the key of the enemy's position. At page 240 will be found these words:—

"The Government, which, like a snowball, had been changing its composition as it was kicked along, was now dissolving fast beneath the breath of Chatham."

We have all seen snowballs thrown; and many of us have no doubt assisted in the operation of rolling them. We are not aware that kicking them is at all a common practice. It would almost be presumable that some confusion between a snowball and a football was exercising our historian while he was engaged in the manufacture of this beautiful simile. That, however, is but the minor offence of the sentence. Whether kicked or rolled, the composition of the snowball does not change as the motion is continued. Its bulk increases wonderfully, as many an experimenter in that field has seen with admiration; but its composition first and last is the same.

* "We have the receipt of fern-seed,—we walk invisible."—1st Part of King Henry IV., Act ii. sc. 1.

Let any reader ask himself whether that which happened to the Government is made one whit clearer or more intelligible,—we will not ask whether it is strikingly brought home to the comprehension,—by this method of relating it. The answer which we expect is,—No: the composition of the snowball does not change; but Mr Trevelyan would do well to change *his*.

At page 336 we come upon,—“Thurlow was as well acquainted as any man living with the source which in those days fed the fountain of honour.” Our dictionaries show us that “source” and “fountain” mean exactly the same thing. How then can a source feed a fountain? It may, and does, feed a stream.

It is no fault of an author that he does not possess a quick or a vivid imagination. But it is his mistake if, being wholly destitute of such a faculty, he attempts to write as if the fields of fancy were at his commandment, and so covers his pages with rubbish such as we have been exposing. Mr Trevelyan can write simply and naturally enough. How much better then to be content to do that with much plainness of expression, and to leave similitudes to those who have the gift of “turning to shapes” “the forms of unknown things”!

We would remark, moreover, that if a little of the pains which have been expended in forging fanciful sentences had been given to the careful review and correction of the more prosaic paragraphs, the text would have been improved and the charge of carelessness avoided. In justification of this criticism, we point to page 235, where we meet with this sentence:—

“Lord Campbell has printed the well-turned phrases in which Stanis-

laus Augustus, writing from Warsaw, delicately reminded Charles Yorke that it was *too much* to expect a King of Poland to pity anybody, and *least of all* a man who could command, and was framed to appreciate, a life of dignified and cultured ease.”

The italics are ours. We venture to observe that “least of all” has no meaning when used relatively to “too much.”

At page 251 we have,—“He had hardly sat down . . . *than* he rose,” &c. The italics again are ours.

The sentence about Lord Shelburne’s disposition, which occurs on the upper half of page 151, is too long to quote; but any one who may read it will find a difficulty in understanding how he regarded his associates “as one less honest and less capable than the other.”

Moreover, we fear that we must lay to Mr Trevelyan’s charge some faults which carelessness will hardly account for: such, for instance, as in the sentence on page 85, which we extract:—

“It would be unchivalrous to revive the personal history of too many among the fair dames to whom, and about whom, Walpole indited his letters, even though a century has elapsed since they were laid elsewhere than in their husband’s family vault.”

Now surely these “fair dames” had among them more than one husband, and more than one family vault. Yet the text suggests an *ultra*-Mormon state of things and a community of sepulture.

With regard to the expression at page 201, “each in their several counties,” and to similar expressions in other parts of the book, we would remind the author of a verse of the poet Gray, whose authority he will probably submit to more patiently than to our animadversion. Gray, in his “Elegy,” wrote—correctly wrote—

"Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

Gray attended to a point of grammar—namely, that "each" is a singular pronoun, and requires the corresponding pronoun to be in the same number.

From Lord Byron also may be obtained a lesson calculated to do good to Mr Trevelyan's composition. At page 350 of the book under review, we find the following: ". . . of two silly members of Parliament, it was not easy to say which was the silliest."

In his "Isles of Greece" Byron wrote—

"Of two such lessons why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?"—

from which example it may perhaps be inferred that an author who would write elegantly (as Mr Trevelyan has some idea that he does) must use the comparative degree when only two persons or things are compared.

It would be tedious to follow these little lapses farther, though we are far from having named them all. Sufficient has been said to show the necessity that the author should consider his ways before he again submits a work to the public judgment, and avoid what are without doubt damaging blemishes. In some of the praises bestowed upon his book, his admirers have thoughtlessly compared him with a most distinguished writer of the present century, now no more, whose mantle, or a corner of it, may not unnaturally have fallen on his shoulders; but the distinguished writer in question is famous for the force, beauty, and propriety of his illustration, and his fastidious pen would never have traced the faulty sentences which we have just now noticed. It is much pleasanter to be compared with the *élite* than to be convicted of inelegancies

and errors; our remarks will read harshly after the wholesale approbation of some who preceded us; and yet we have taken the more friendly part. In writing to those who will mend—and we hope that Mr Trevelyan is of them—it is kinder to reprove what is really objectionable than by indiscriminate commendation to encourage faults.

Of set purpose we gave precedence to our censures in order to have done with the disagreeable part of our duty. But we find in the book things of which we can honestly speak well. We feel indebted to the author for the "profound remark" which, on page 156, he has cited from Emerson, that success is a constitutional trait. And we like it better as broadly stated by Mr Trevelyan in the text than as explained by Emerson in the note, for the following reason. Emerson is inclined to make the "trait" the effect of rude bodily health, which, to our mind, is disagreeably narrowing its possible causes. An instance mentioned higher up the page tells dead against success being always referable to a hardy frame and a blacksmith's pulse. Nelson, who determined to succeed, and did succeed, was but a thread-paper of a man bodily. It was the soul within him which compelled success. The doctrine is more comfortable when we are left to regard the "trait" as either physical or spiritual; and it is one which may help us to a great deal of reflection.

The description of Wilkes's election for Middlesex in 1768 is spirited and entertaining. We are shown the saucy demagogue just rejected by the city of London, not in the least abashed, but announcing with the calmest effrontery that he is a candidate for the county. The day of election comes; the polling-place is Brent-

ford. Some preparations are made by the authorities to protect the supporters of the unpopular candidate—that is, Wilkes's rival; but they are made at the wrong place. The peace-officers are gathered together in the town of Brentford, where there is perfect quiet; while on the roads leading towards it, the mob, entirely unimpeded, does its will on the adverse voters who may have designed to exercise their rights on the occasion. Horne Tooke, the restless parson, a devoted admirer of Wilkes, is the leading spirit on the occasion, finding drink and counsel for the rioters, and giving exhortations of wondrous potency to those who can contrive to record their votes. How the smashing and intimidation proceeded, without molestation from the authorities, is graphically presented; as also that this tumult, like many another, was got up in the name of Liberty, which was on this occasion coupled with the name of Wilkes.

Wilkes was elected—it could not have been otherwise under the circumstances; but the mob was by no means satisfied with having secured the return of its darling. It insisted on the whole metropolis rejoicing with it, and illuminating in honour of its triumph. We learn the sad fate of some obstinate recusants whose windows were smashed, and the fine time thus created for the glaziers, who grew rich through the innumerable repairs; and we are told of a noble lady who essayed to imitate the defence made by Charlotte of Derby at Latham House, defied the populace, and stood a siege of three hours rather than let a spark scintillate to glorify the cause which she abhorred.

Then we have the mob, after sternly insisting on the reasonable tribute of illumination, waxing humorous and playful, and executing a number of *facetie*, the subjects of which may well have congratulated themselves that nothing severer than horse-play was for the moment in vogue with *messieurs* the rabble.

"The Austrian ambassador, the most precise and solemn of German counts, was pulled out of his carriage by a troop of patriots, who probably mistook him for a recent importation from North Britain, and who deliberately proceeded to chalk '45'* on the sole of his shoe. The English peers were treated with more good-humour than the Scotch, but with quite as little ceremony. Those who were caught on their way from a rout were ordered to huzza for Wilkes and Liberty; and then were graciously permitted to drive home with glasses broken, and the magic number scratched all over the panels of their chariots. One great Duke found that it was not enough to regale the populace with beer unless he would swallow some of it himself to the health of the new member for Middlesex." †

When the train-bands were called out, the drummers who should have beat the *générale* were marching at the heads of divisions of the mob; the train-bands and the rioters were related in the degree of masters and apprentices, and were more likely to fraternise than to fight each other. Though the regulars were under arms, the populace, who by this time, after three days, were growing weary of their amusement, gave them a wide berth. A little later the tumults subsided, and this chapter of Wilkes's glory was at an end.

We would remark here that the whole of the account to which we

* It was No. 45 of the 'North Briton' which was Wilkes's chief offence.

† P. 176.

refer is plain, but very effective, narration, without figures of rhetoric ; and our remarks may supply a hint to the author as to "*quid ferre recusent, quid valeant humeri.*"

But Mr Trevelyan can be smart as well as pleasantly descriptive. Whether his smartness is always fair we are not sure ; but the piece (at page 378) which we are about to notice is a little severe on the gentlemen of the long robe, and students of Lord Brougham and Lord Campbell will best judge of its justice. We cite it for its style. After observing that the lawyers did not enjoy much honour in the House of Commons, and after attributing this to their having worked their way up from a humbler level, and to "what Bubb Doddington and Henry Fox would have termed moral causes," the text continues thus :—

"Everybody" (such would be the theory of those profound observers) "was greedy, but the lawyer was selfish. Everybody was ready to change sides with the rest of the connection to which he belonged ; but the lawyer ratted alone, and at the moment which suited his individual interests. The Bedfords hunted in a pack ; the Pelhams ran in a couple ; but the lawyer pursued his peculiar prey with solitary avidity, and with a clamour which went far to spoil the sport of the entire field. It was hard enough that a barrister, with a seat which he had bought cheap from some patron of a borough who had overstayed his market, should talk of himself as ill-used if he did not secure a recordership in the course of his second session, and a judgeship before the end of his second Parliament ; while a squire, who had fought his county at every general election since he came of age, was bidden by the Ministers to think himself lucky, and by Junius to consider himself infamous, if in the fulness of time his fidelity was rewarded by a place which hardly paid the rent of his town house and the wages of his chairmen. But it was

positively insufferable that a quiet supporter of the Government, who, after much study and many misgivings, had screwed himself up to the determination of showing his leaders that he could speak as well as vote, should find himself forestalled at every stage of the debate by the fluency of men whose trade, as Chatham told them, was words. Whenever anything was to be said, there never was wanting an honourable and learned gentleman to say it, at five times the length of anybody else, and with the air of authority betokening a profession which earns its bread by affecting to be infallible."

Lawyers are a tenacious fraternity, and it is quite possible that some of them may seek seats in Parliament even after reading these scathing sentences. That, however, is not our affair. We place the passage before our readers to convince them that Mr Trevelyan can lay on his lash when it so pleases him ; also as affording one of the pictures of society which are frequent in the book, and to which we have more than once alluded in this paper.

Our author, as has been before hinted, does not move very rapidly in the acquisition of historical knowledge. He is not aware of the persistency with which history repeats itself. He tells the story of an election club at Shoreham in 1768, as if it were an antiquarian curiosity, for which the remotest resemblance could not be found in these days of Whig regeneration. It is clear that to his mind such electoral depravity is as much an anachronism in 1881 as the wolves would be or the *peine forte et dure* ; yet haply there be some who think that we be witnesses to ourselves that we are the sons of such as those who made Shoreham notorious more than a century ago. In that town there was, it would seem, an association originally formed to

promote shipbuilding, but in 1764 devoted to works of charity, and named the Christian Club. Each of its members was sworn on the four evangelists to be steadfast, true, and silent.

"Those members included the majority of the borough voters; and the society, whether in the commercial or the religious phase of its existence, had, in point of fact, never been anything else than a trades-union for purposes of corruption. On the principle that no man has a right to injure his neighbour by selling his conscience below the market price—and that the skilful and the clumsy, the impudent and the bashful, ought to share and share alike in the wages fund of bribery—the Club, on the eve of an election, made its bargain for the payment of a lump sum, which was divided, after the contest was over, among men who were thus enabled to swear at the polling-booth that they had never received a farthing for their votes." *

Homer had an idea that men in his time had degenerated; and we read of a similar belief in North Britain, as

"Still in Stirling's royal park,
The grey-haired sires, who know the
past,
To strangers point the Douglas cast,
And moralise on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern day."

But Mr Trevelyan is an optimist where Whiggism is concerned. Complacent amid the electoral purity of to-day, he can smile at the depravity of the days of old. Nevertheless, he has given an amusing picture of the archaic wickedness of the Shoreham Christian Club, proving to us that, though the sins of Shoreham and its likes are no more to be found to-day than are the Cities of the Plain, yet he knows how to use them to point a moral or adorn a history.

The stories which our author has brought together concerning Brooks's, and other London Clubs, are, in our opinion, the liveliest parts of the book. As they have all often appeared in print, we hardly care to extract any; but it is pleasant to find so many now collected, and moreover placed in juxtaposition with other social marks, and with the political incidents of the period of the history. The curious, though not creditable, revelations from the betting-book at Brooks's would appear to be made public now for the first time. Yet it is a question whether the world would have sustained a great loss if they had remained in darkness for ever; as it is also a question whether, now that attention has been again called to Fox's early debaucheries and extravagances, any good has been done to his memory or our morals.

The same cannot be said of the accounts of hard living and its consequences, which Mr Trevelyan both depicts and comments on in a very good spirit, and in a manner calculated to warn any of us who may be misguided enough to be devoted to the pleasures of the table. Squires past hunting and shooting at fifty-five, and Cabinet Ministers of like age unable to write confidential despatches with their own hands, were common examples in those convivial days. Old age seems to have come upon our great-grandfathers between forty and fifty; and the gout, which appears to have been the common lot as much as the grave was, was apt exceedingly to embitter the downhill of life.

The history does not take us so far as to the American war; and although it glances at the termination of the war with Spain and

France in 1763, it shows us, as far as foreign relations are concerned, a time of profound peace. By the way, it may be not uninteresting to remark that the loudest patriotic charge made against Lord Bute was for concluding peace—a peace that was in no way derogatory to the honour of Great Britain. War was the line which patriotism took at that period. And it is curious to observe how in this our day patriotism has altered its taste. Peace is now the cry: nor even is an honourable peace insisted on, but peace at any price. It is much to be feared that Patriotism is ready to shout for peace or war, knave or noble, black or white, according to the party exigency of the moment. And this remark leads conveniently to the mention of the political attitude in which our history leaves Mr Fox. After having been twice in and out of office before he was five-and-twenty—after he had, as if in mere scorn of principle, taken such parts in the debates on every

question of his time as his caprice prompted him to take—and after having, by the force of his intellect and tongue, given colour to the side of his temporary adoption,—he is at the age of five-and-twenty adrift as to politics, and at liberty to reflect how he can best enjoy himself, and what further use or misuse he will make of the talents with which he is endowed. “Let time shape, and there an end,” was probably his way of disposing of the future as he tossed off his bumper. Time did shape, as we all know, and the fame of Mr Fox as a speaker rang in all ears throughout the next generation.

He was an extraordinary man truly, and “the greatest known master of the art, in which, of all arts, an Englishman covets to excel;” * yet we question whether any generous Englishman of the present day would accept the eloquence of the grandson of Atlas, if it were to be attended by the profligacy and the unprincipled life of Charles James Fox.

* P. 298.

MR COX'S PROTÉGÉ.

IN TWO PARTS.

I.

ABRAHAM COX was the only son of the eminent private banker and philanthropist. The paternal Cox was senior partner in the respectable firm of Cox & Curries, that had been flourishing in Nicholas Lane through four or five generations. Abraham the elder was as well known in Exeter Hall as in Lombard Street. Abraham the younger had been cradled in luxury, but had taken kindly to imitating his parent's philanthropy. As a child he had been in the habit of passing on his hoops and tops to the lucky offspring of the keepers and day-labourers. As a boy at Eton his munificent tips ran through his pockets as fast as they flowed in; for he had a heart to feel for his fellow-creatures, and "a hand open as the day for melting charity." At Cambridge, though people might smile at his eccentricities; though the dons and his tutors shook their heads, and he had made himself a general reputation as an odd fish, —yet he had stanch and admiring friends in his extensive circle of acquaintances. He was so good-tempered and so liberal, that it was impossible not to like him; and then no man in college was much better company when he was not airing one of his crotchets. There were others who, though anything but sympathetic, swore by so generous a paymaster; for they could always count on him for timely assistance when allowances were overdrawn and duns were bothersome. He did not neglect the apostolic precept of being given to hospitality. His "cronies" were anything but few or far be-

tween; he ran abnormal scores in the buttery-hatch and kitchen; and his guests endured his occasional long-windedness in consideration of his profusion and the quality of his vintages. Then Abraham had more than respectable talents, though he only read by fits and starts; and he had a pleasant face and a stalwart person, and was fairly "good all round" at most things. He pulled stroke in the second college boat; he was quick on his legs and ready with his returns in the tennis-court; and though he seldom rode to hounds, he had the seat of a man accustomed to the saddle. One foible he had that came next to his excessive philanthropy, even in those early days—he had a morbid horror of "putting on flesh," though it must be confessed there was some justification for it. For with his fine appetite and easy-going nature, he was always on the brink of tipping the scales at something over fifteen stone. He might have grown gross and unwieldy had he yielded to his natural indolence and rather sedentary inclinations. As it was, he made it a matter of conscience to go in for those active relaxations we have alluded to; and when he was not handling the oar or knocking about the tennis-balls, he was cantering on the turf by the highway to Newmarket, or doing indefatigable constitutionals on the Trumpington road.

Old Cox opened his eyes at his son's college accounts. But after all, there was entire confidence between the two: the lad was guilty of no discreditable follies; there

was not one item that could not pass a satisfactory audit; and what chiefly swelled his bills was his practice of the parental precepts. Nor need the successor to the chief-tainship of Cox & Curries look closely either to pounds or pence. So Abraham took a respectable degree; and his father having liquidated his outstanding liabilities, he went "down" from Cambridge to London to be initiated into the banking business.

Cox & Curries was believed to be one of those solvent, old-fashioned houses that have gone on steadily extending a lucrative hereditary connection. Men said, of course, that they had been suffering in common with other private bankers, from the neck-or-nothing competition of newfangled joint-stock enterprise. If they really suffered, they made no sign. They never dreamed of putting polished granite columns into the smoke-begrimed front of their musty premises. They seldom cleaned their dingy window-panes. Old Mr Cox came up from his seat in Surrey, or drove into the City from his house in Brook Street, at least five days in the six; and there you found him rubbing his hands in a genial overflow of serene benevolence, chatting with his good friends and partners, or giving smiling orders to respectful clerks. The firm had always been a close corporation, and Coxes had been in the habit of intermarrying with Curries, keeping the bulk of the profits in the going concern.

Abraham junior was welcomed with the devotion due to the heir of the reigning prince; and a solidly furnished though dismal apartment, duly safed and grated, was set apart to his separate use. The reverence he inherited as a part of his birthright stifled for long any rumours to his disadvantage. He was a young hand,

and had to be broken to the business, though the purest banking blood ran in his veins,—and we know that *bon chien chasse de race*. But soon it began to be bruited about, that notwithstanding young Mr Abraham's pleasant manners, he was likely to prove anything but an acquisition. There was murmuring from the head-cashier down to the messengers: the Curries laid their heads together and shook them, and the shadows of some flitting clouds of care would eclipse the elder Cox's constitutional serenity. Not that the younger man was negligent,—very far from it. On the contrary, he was only too assiduous in his attendance; and it was his virtues that began to bring him into discredit,—for his father wished to push him forward that he might be prepared for the position he was destined to fill, and he was nervously alive to a sense of his responsibilities. But then his philanthropy would come into play—the philanthropy which his more practical parent had been in the habit of leaving behind at the door of the bank. He had never learned to say "No," and he found it hard to begin. Spendthrift or speculative customers who had an instinctive *flaire* for accommodating financiers, began to find him out. They surmised that they pleased the head of the firm by making a point of asking for young Mr Abraham; and young Mr Abraham was invariably at his post. It was seldom indeed that these interviews did not end satisfactorily for the visitors. Mr Abraham delighted in putting in practice his sentiments of charity towards his neighbours. Appeals to his feelings made him oblivious of figures. He consented to make advances on shady securities, and salved his conscience with gentle remonstrances when it was a question of customers' accounts being overdrawn. Of course

these financial arrangements of his were subject to the assent of the partners; but it seemed ungracious to be perpetually calling him over the coals, and the father showed some irritability of temper when the *lâches* of the son were brought under discussion. The safe business of Cox & Curries threatened to be revolutionised; the grey-headed chief cashier actually succumbed to the strain, and took to his bed in his villa at Brompton for the first time in the memory of man.

To cut the preliminaries of our story short, things came to a crisis. The Curries expostulated, and finally protested. Cox senior made some fight, but in the end he yielded in sorrow and heaviness. As for young Abraham, though a good deal hurt, he behaved with the conscientious disinterestedness that might have been expected. He had been acting to the best of his lights, but would be guided by the wishes and interests of the firm. So it was settled that he should retire into private life, while the interest he must inherit on his father's death must be left to fructify under the management of others.

The first mortification over, Abraham took out a new lease of happiness. He could go his own way for the future, and give himself up to far more congenial pursuits. Old Abraham consoled his son by making him an extremely liberal allowance—imploing him, with tears in his eyes, never to hesitate to overdraw it. Now that he was the master of his time, he had endless irons in the fire; but as facetious friends used to say, he chiefly went in for the three R's—ragged schools, refugees, and reformatories. He had made a most miscellaneous acquaintance, from benevolent peers to Sabbath-school teachers and city missionaries. Even

his worthy father thought he rather overdid it. For he used to invite to their house in Brook Street, and to Druids' Wood, their noble seat on the Surrey Hills, a singularly odd and promiscuous company; and more than once he scandalised the motherly housekeeper by confiding Magdalenes to her charge, whom he had picked up in the course of his peregrinations.

When this sort of thing had gone on for a year or two, Mr Cox the elder was gathered to his fathers, and Abraham was left something more than wealthy. He had the property in Surrey, a loose hundred thousand or so in Consols, and, above all, the sleeping partnership in the city. Surely no man stood better as to the future, so far as worldly prosperity was concerned; while the blessings of the poor and needy came daily showering upon his head. And for once in a way, the world was agreed that no man more entirely deserved his happiness.

The only changes he made in his way of living were, to let the house in Brook Street, removing himself to chambers in the Albany, and launching more lavishly into charitable expenditure. His cheques were always forthcoming for the victims of appalling calamities, from explosions in English coal-mines to famines and conflagrations in the East. But still his favourite hobby was prison reform. He was hand in glove with the governors and chaplains of most of the metropolitan and suburban jails; though these case-hardened gentlemen kept themselves on their guard against the characteristic weakness of their visitor. They would remind him that in his sympathy with the suffering he forgot the crimes for which they were doing penance; that he ignored the necessity for protecting society by inflicting deterrent retribution on the

vicious. Naturally, the shrewder sinners got on the blind side of the philanthropist; but neither disappointments nor indiscretions seemed to shake his faith in the perfectibility of the most erring of his fellow-creatures.

And so it came about that he made the acquaintance of his too famous *protégé*. Pentonhook prison, which had been hitherto beyond his beat, chanced to become, one summer, his favourite resort. It is pleasantly situated in the meadows on the banks of the Thames, half-way between Chertsey and Staines; and in going to it he could combine pleasure with duty. On many a sunny day in July and August might he have been seen sculling an outrigger between Walton-on-Thames and the little public-house, dear to boating-men, where he changed his flannels for more conventional garb. But Abraham had made the acquaintance of Mr Molyneux, the prison chaplain—had taken a strong liking to him at first sight, and had repeatedly invited him to dinner at the Albany and the Samaritan Club.

"Why shouldn't you come and dress at my little cottage?" said Mr Molyneux one evening; "you'll find it quieter, and quite as convenient as The Bells." Mr Cox had at once accepted the invitation. He was glad to do a good-natured thing by letting the chaplain make some little return for his dinners: and his kindly thoughtfulness had its reward when Mr Molyneux, ushering him into a pretty little sitting-room, presented a young lady as "my daughter."

It was really love at first sight, though Cox, as yet knowing nothing of the feeling, failed at first to recognise the symptoms. For once, to his surprise, he felt diffident and embarrassed—phenomena strange enough in a man so entirely free from self-consciousness; and he

beat rather a precipitate retreat to strip his flannels up-stairs. Miss Molyneux was a woman, and not a mere girl—she must have been four-and-twenty at the least. She could hardly have been insensible to her own attractions, even if she distrusted her father's partiality; and yet, seeing their visitor for the first time, she never suspected the cause of his confusion. She was prepared to like Mr Cox, and was grateful for his kindness to her father: but he lived in a very different sphere from theirs; and she fancied she was never likely to see much of him—though there, as it subsequently proved, she was mistaken.

"He's nice, I daresay, papa, and I'm sure he's very good: isn't he rather—rather—well—rather stupid?" But she spoke all the more diffidently that Mr Molyneux had been eloquent in praises of his friend.

"Stupid, Saint Cecilia! Why, what can you be dreaming of, my darling? I have met few abler men than Cox: vast stores of practical information, and a really remarkable capacity for adding to them. Why, though he is always so willing to learn, I can tell you he gave me more than one wrinkle as to prison economy. He has mixed with the criminal classes from Paris to St Petersburg, and actually had himself locked up for a couple of days in the cells of Sing-Sing, that he might judge for himself of the solitary and silent system." And Mr Molyneux shrugged his shoulders somewhat indignantly—an extraordinary stretch of severity towards his daughter.

"Ah, well, papa, you know him, and no doubt you are right," returned the young lady apologetically. She was too honest to recant altogether without being really convinced. "And then there's one good thing," she added, chang-

ing the subject—"I don't feel in the very least alarmed at him, and I am quite sure he is extremely good-natured. So I shall have all the less hesitation in recommending poor Lurcher to his kindness."

Miss Molyneux, like Abraham, was an only and a motherless child, and as much or more the pet of her father. She had known little of the luxury the banker had been brought up to; but since she had arrived early at years of discretion, she had managed, on very moderate means, to surround them in their modest household with many of the elegancies of life. Abraham, as he attired himself in his upper chamber, had already assured himself that it was one of the brightest cottages in the world, while the arrangement of the tiny garden was a miracle of graceful good taste. In all the details of everything about him, he recognised the presence of the ministering angel who presided over the establishment.

His enthusiasm might be hurrying him rather fast; yet had he "inquired below," facts would have confirmed it. Molyneux had good reason to know all the domestic virtues of his daughter. Moreover, she was as gently beneficent out of doors as within—a sister of mercy in the prison hospital: flitting about the ruffled pillows of the sick, and whispering comfort in the ears which the most obdurate bent to listen. Then she played the organ exquisitely in chapel, and she led the hymns in a voice that echoed from the hearts of the prisoners. And so her father in his pride and loving admiration had long ago dubbed her his Saint Cecilia. As for the saint's figure, it was good; and though her face might be a trifle over-placid in repose, there was no reproaching it with want of expression when it brightened with mirth, or love, or pity. Abraham

seemed to have had the luck at last to light upon his "sympathetic affinity."

For the first time in his life he felt reluctant to enter a prison. But the clock reminded him that the hours were slipping away, and he rose to say good-bye to his hostess and that delightful little drawing-room. Not till then did she muster resolution to make her request,—for she was little in the habit of asking favours, even for other people. Mr Cox evidently listened to it with unfeigned interest and pleasure; and there was neither confusion of manner nor lack of decision in his cordial response.

"Anything I can do to befriend him you may depend upon; but I must say I do think it rather hard that you won't tell me his story yourself."

"No, no, Mr Cox; I had much rather leave that to him. And if he tells it as touchingly as he told it to me, I am sure you will forgive me for bringing him to your notice. Perhaps I should have asked my father to make the request; but poor James made me promise that I would interest myself personally for him if ever I had the opportunity. I'm sure I don't know why."

"I can guess," said her father, smiling at her. "The young man is no fool; nor do I think any the worse of him for his choice of an advocate. I must say," he observed, as he accompanied Cox towards the prison, "this youth, who is a special favourite of my daughter's, appears to be a deserving case. The old story of weakness and temptations, bad company, and a slip into crime. However, as Cecilia said, you will hear it all from himself."

They found the prison doctor in the sick-ward.

"I hardly know what to make

of him," observed the Esculapius, gravely, shaking his head. "At first I fancied he was shamming; but there's no conceivable reason for that,—for he goes out in a few days, and has lost an admirable appetite. The pulse is low, no doubt; but then, he is eating next to nothing. He will have it that it's anxiety; and as he appears to be of a morbid and sensitively nervous temperament, it's quite possible he may be telling the truth. At all events, Miss Molyneux believes in him, and she has seen more of him than any of us; and I've seldom known her humbugged—that is to say, more than is right and reasonable in a sympathetic intelligent woman."

The hospital warder declined to commit himself. No. 77 had only been in his hands for two or three days. But he, too, muttered something about Miss Molyneux being most times in the right of it.

Mr Lurcher's appearance was touching, and not altogether unprepossessing. You could read but little of his character in his eyes; for the lids were weighed down with the languor of exhaustion. The pallid features were fairly good, except for a slight "snub" in the nose; and if the forehead appeared to recede, the effect of that might be exaggerated by the cropping of hair that inclined to the caroty. As the party stood grouped around the bed, the invalid turned on his pillow, and half opened his eyes. To the warder, with the ingrained suspicion of his calling, it seemed as if he pricked his ears to the subdued murmur of their whispers.

"How do you find yourself to-day, my good fellow?" inquired Mr Molyneux, bending over him.

The prisoner looked up at him gratefully. "Not any better, sir. I seem to be sinking every day." He was decidedly "down upon his

luck;" so the chaplain sought to rouse him. "Come, my lad, you must cheer up a bit! You'll have your liberty and a change of scene in a few days; and in the meantime I've brought a good gentleman to see you." Whereupon Mr Cox stepped forward and laid a kindly hand on his shoulder. "I came to have a little talk with you, if you are equal to it. Miss Molyneux——"

The name acted like a spell. "Oh, sir, if you come from Miss Molyneux, for heaven's sake don't leave me till I find strength to speak to you. She's an angel, that lady is, if ever there was one." Whereupon Mr Cox, finding himself and the captive so entirely at one on that most important point, had his friendly feelings towards him heated sevenfold. And Mr Molyneux, turning to the doctor, suggested a stimulant; and poor Lurcher's face grew brighter still,—and he was evidently all the better for the brandy-and-water. As he slowly gathered strength to speak up, we shall leave him, as Miss Molyneux had done, to give the diagnosis of his maladies, physical and moral, merely condensing for the sake of brevity.

He was not always what the gentleman saw him—far from it. He had been brought up by a worthy mother, who had given him the best education she could afford. He was doing well at school, and might have done better; but the widow was driven to make the two ends meet, and it was high time her son should help her. And a kind gentleman who knew he had been brought up respectably, took him into his office. "Ah, those were happy days! though I know now that I didn't rightly value them, and I deserve to suffer for it." His good master died, but Providence helped him to another

place. This time it was with a grocer—a member of the chapel where his mother used to worship. He was quick enough—though he said it that perhaps shouldn't—quick and industrious, and the grocer set him to help to keep his books, and sent him out sometimes to collect the bills. By that time he was seventeen, and he stayed on there a couple of years, and might have been with his master now, and done highly respectable. “Only that bad company was the ruin of me. For I was always innocent and trusting of my nature. I wouldn't wish to be hard upon anybody, for well I know how bad I am myself; but Jack O'Driscoll was a bad one, and no mistake.” Jack was a play-actor at the “Duke of Edinburgh” in the Waterloo Road; he was pleasant company, and used to carry orders for the pit in his pocket, and slowly but surely he led poor Lurcher off his legs. It was Jack who persuaded him to borrow trifles from the till, which sometimes were repaid and more often not. It was Jack who urged him, when his good master was ill, to take advantage of his opportunities and help him to a ten-pound note. It was Jack who overcame his conscientious resistance by threats of exposure and promises of repayment. For that series of petty pilferings had cost him many a bitter tear, and he had resolved to save up and make restitution. “Ah, sir, if I had only let him do his worst.” But then, as James owned himself weak, he had yielded, to his sorrow. Retribution followed quickly upon sin. His master rallied of a sudden, and his thefts were found out. The case was sent for trial; in his penitence he told his unvarnished tale. But the villanous O'Driscoll vowed he had never touched a shilling of the money, and the evidence failed to

bring his guilt home to him. Not that the proofs of his instigation could have possibly done more than mitigate the consequences of Lurcher's embezzlement; but O'Driscoll's hardened mendacity misled the Recorder, and more than outweighed the wish of Lurcher's employer, that the case should be dealt with as leniently as possible. “They gave me a year,” said James, “and no doubt I deserved it; but what went to my heart was the words of the judge. For he up and gave it me, hot and heavy, for trying a plant upon an innocent man.”

His mother believed him, if no one else did; but the loss of her only son under the circumstances was the beginning of the troubles of which she died. He had striven to keep a good heart and give satisfaction to the gentlemen in the prison; he hoped that he would go out the better for Mr Molyneux's kind instructions; and as for Mr Molyneux's daughter, if they would forgive him making so free, none but a poor fellow like himself could tell the half of what Miss Molyneux had been to him. And as he invoked blessings on her beautiful head, he stole glances at Mr Cox through his watery eyes. For the most part, he was thankful to say, he had been strong and hearty. But for the last week or two his spirits had been going down, till he became less equal to his work, and lost relish for his victuals. “And I've had strange-like pains in the head and in the inwards, till somehow I've got to be sure that I shan't be very long for this world.”

“Nonsense, my good fellow!” said Abraham, cheerily; “you keep a good heart still, and you'll be worth a dozen dead men. You know you'll be out and about in ten days, and then you may lead a happy and respectable life.”

"I doubt, gentlemen, that you'll hardly believe me; but I do think it's that going out again in the world that has been making me so uncommon down upon my luck. My poor mother is gone, and my character: I've lost my place, and I carry the mark of the prison about with me; and if I fell into evil company before, I fear my chances now are worse than ever."

Philanthropist as he was, our friend was no fool, and in other circumstances he might have regarded Mr Lurcher with strong feelings of suspicion. But in his present unaccustomed excitement, suspicion would have seemed like sacrilege. He looked at the invalid through Miss Molyneux's eyes, and struggled against any rising doubt of him. So he gave the sinner cordial assurance for the future. He told him again to cheer up, and try to eat and do his best to get upon his legs. If he made up his mind to do well when he came out after his term, he need never want a friend or employment. The comfort fell like balm on the wounded spirit of the penitent; he drew a long breath of ineffable relief: and if Abraham wanted further reward, he had a handsome instalment of it when Mr Molyneux cordially grasping his hand, thanked him for himself and on behalf of his daughter.

We have introduced our friend as the philanthropist; we are now to make his acquaintance as the athlete. A mind most virtuously at ease was in one respect a misfortune to him. He actually gained flesh in his labours, and a serious anxiety it was to him. In vain he left his brougham at home, doing most of his benevolent work on foot; in vain he took afternoons with the gun at Druids' Wood, and long gallops on the Surrey downs. He came home hungry, dined heart-

ily, slept soundly, and got up in the morning to mark an extra ounce on his weighing-machine more often than not. So with the return of the summer he was always eager to indulge in one of his annual holidays, and, like a schoolboy broken loose from school, would make his arrangements accordingly. Being extremely sociable, he had to look up a companion or two; and about that there was no difficulty whatever. He had a little group of thick-and-thin friends who had lived in his intimacy since the old Trinity days. They thought all the better of him for having thrown over the banking business, and shown a soul superior to sordid money-grubbing; the more so, that his wealth made him entirely independent, and that his cellars and cigars were beyond impeachment. Though they rather tolerated his benevolence as an amiable eccentricity, they thought little the worse of him because he cherished the poor and spent so much of his leisure in looking after the prisoners. At home or on his travels he was the same good fellow, never setting himself up for a censor though he had decided principles of his own; always ready to laugh at a joke, not unfrequently making a very good one; and invariably sympathetic in the pleasures of the table, although sometimes his digestion might be troubled by remorse. Mr Abraham was by temperament somewhat sensually inclined, if his conscience warned him towards asceticism. But by flood or fell, in field or forest, whether paddling a canoe or sculling an outrigger, scrambling along some giddy Alpine ledge, or scaling the face of a frozen precipice, you could only admire his pluck and dash. He showed slightly unwieldy, to be sure, and there was room for improvement in his wind and condition; but that

only made his efforts the more meritorious. He was held in high esteem as one of the most enterprising members of the Canoe Club; and though he hardly ranked among the *élite* of mountaineering men, yet few of the ornaments of the Alpine Club were more popular, either among their companions or the guides.

One fine June morning in 187—, I found a note from my friend Abraham on my breakfast-table. It was short, and went straight to the point, like his non-philanthropic correspondence generally:—

“DEAR HOOPER,—I am rather overworked and over-weight, and on Wednesday next am off to the Continent. What do you say? Steam and rail to Cologne, canoe up the Rhine, and train to Würzburg. Rail to Donauworth; down the Danube to the Kaiserstadt; back as we may to Bregenz, and then hey for the High Alps!—Yours sincerely, A. Cox.

“P.S.—I have sent a retainer to Peter Wildheuer at Grindelwald for a day to be settled later.”

There was much in the short note that “suited me down to the ground.” I like a bout of canoeing abroad, and delight in the wild scenery of the upper Danube. I am good at any time for some mild mountaineering; I was beginning to get somewhat restless myself, and I always got on capitally with Abraham. So I promptly returned an assent, though making my own conditions. Circumstances prevented my leaving England so suddenly as Abraham desired; and besides, I had strong constitutional objections to paddling perseveringly against a rapid stream. So I proposed to start a few days later, making an appointment for the fair city of Mayence, whither he was to

undertake the charge of my canoe. By way of rider, I added a civil hope that he would not mind the solitary voyage from Cologne. Abraham curtly acknowledged by telegraph—“All right, and I need not be uneasy. He took a servant with him who was something of a friend.”

That latter bit of information might be more consolatory to him than to me. I figured to myself one of the old family retainers of his venerable father, not knowing a word of foreign tongues, and helplessly ignorant of the habits of the natives; and I fancied we might have bothersome work cut out for us in acting couriers to a petted menial. But the appointment was made; I could hardly back out, had I cared to: and so, though my anxiety was awakened by fits and starts, I hoped for the best, and thought little on the matter.

There are few more comfortable hotels in Rhineland than the Englischer Hof at Mayence. Descending at the door a little before the dinner-hour, I found Cox had made every preparation to welcome me. He had a satisfaction in roughing it on occasions, or when he was alone; really enjoying the sense of self-mortification nearly as much as the best-served banquet. But he gladly hailed any decent excuse to make a friend happy by profuse hospitality, and there was a table laid for three in the little sitting-room, with heavy-stemmed goblets of Venetian glass, and sundry long-necked flasks scattered about among fruits on salvers and bouquets of flowers. The third *convive* was just the sort of man I should have expected to meet. He was a rheumatic chaplain from an adjacent bath, who had made Abraham's acquaintance in the *salon* downstairs, — who had identified the philanthropist by the autograph in

the hotel-book, and had expressed himself warmly interested in his works. Dinner over, we drew our chairs to the window, and admired the ever-glorious panorama of the Rhine. But our clerical acquaintance was more practical than poetical, and would continually bring back the conversation to the churches, hospitals, and prisons. The meagreness of English ecclesiastical endowments on the Continent was deplorable, especially where the fields of labour were so inviting among our frivolous country-people at the fashionable watering-places. Abraham did not "rise," but frankly avowed his conviction that there were more urgent claims nearer home. So the chaplain shifted his ground, and came back on the safer *terrain* of the reformatories. With that and the Rauenthaler Berg, Abraham warmed, as was his custom. He grew eloquent on the good that might be done to society by saving the culpable from the consequences of their follies. Many a discharged convict, balancing between good and evil, might be swayed in the direction of a respectable life by the exercise of seasonable and discriminating liberality.

"And no man has a better right to speak on these subjects than Mr Cox," exclaimed the reverend guest with honest effusion. "Pray, now, sir," he proceeded, in Boswellian fashion, "do give us a chapter from your own experiences. Nothing could be more profitable or more interesting."

Mr Cox reddened slightly, as was his habit when any of his good deeds were alluded to. Then he glanced somewhat guiltily at me, and finally spoke with a perceptible stammer. "To tell the truth, my dear Hooper, I owe you an explanation, and perhaps an apology; and as we happen to have got upon the

subject, I may as well make them now. This is, of course, in confidence; for the future of a fellow-creature is at stake." The clergyman bowed an assurance of secrecy, —for myself, I pricked my ears at the exordium. As the family servant had hitherto been invisible, I had begun to hope he was a myth; but if there really was a mystery anywhere, I should be glad to have the solution.

Then Abraham gave us Mr Lurcher's story pretty nearly as I have told it; except that he rested as lightly as possible on his own generosity—and in referring to Mr Molyneux's recommendations of the captive, he made the most casual allusion to that gentleman's daughter.

"I took the poor fellow up," he said, "and have had no reason to regret it. I kept my eye upon him through a short probation elsewhere, and then had him into my own service; and upon my word, I do not believe that man had ever a more attached or more willing servant. In fact he was evidently intended for something much higher than a valet, and though I have said nothing as yet of what I mean to do for him, I hope to help him to far better things. He has had a very decent education, and is daily picking up something more. He writes an excellent hand—I sometimes use him as a sort of amanuensis—and has a capital head for figures. I believe that in spite of his antecedents he is to be trusted with untold gold, though in the meantime, in simple justice, I don't put him much into temptation. Necessarily we have been thrown together a good deal in the last few days—when a lad is boating in your company, you feel him more of a comrade than a servant, and I find him as pleasant and intelligent as he is unpresuming. I think

you'll like him, Hooper, when you know him; and I'm sure I may trust you to be kind to him. One fault he has, though I should rather call it his misfortune. I'm trying to cure him of it for his own sake; indeed that was one of my reasons for bringing him abroad. He wants a something—I can hardly express it—not manliness exactly, nor want of pluck,—but I should say that his moral fibre is a trifle flabby. He's irresolute in action, and shows a touch of timidity. One can't wonder at it, poor fellow! He was brought up a Cockney by a fussy old woman, and then we must remember what he has gone through. But he only needs training and some knocking about, with examples like ours, to make a man of him; and by the time we have canoed him down the Danube, and marched him over some passes and cols, we'll make our worthy Jim a different creature altogether."

I own I did not much care for the rôle Abraham was assigning me, of joint trainer and mentor to this half-reclaimed criminal of his. I thought, besides, he might as well have consulted me beforehand. I had a presentiment that Lurcher would prove a nuisance, or something worse. But Abraham was Abraham, and there was no quarrelling with him; and I, too, felt the balmy influences of the fragrant Raenthaler and the summer night.

"My dear fellow, you can't think how grateful I feel for your giving a high moral purpose to our little expedition. And I am the more impatient to see this man Friday of yours, as I am to have the credit of helping you to form his character. Suppose we ring the bell and have him up."

Notwithstanding the imperturbable serenity of his temper, I could see that Abraham did not altogether

like my chaff. Perhaps it was not in the best taste with a stranger present, but I might be forgiven for blowing off my passing annoyance. As I had only too many opportunities of remarking afterwards, he treated James with a partiality,—with something savouring of fondness, which to my slightly prejudiced mind seemed almost grotesquely misplaced. At that time, be it remembered, though I had heard of Miss Molyneux, the mention of her name meant nothing to me. For I cannot say that I fell in love with James at first sight, and still less did he grow into my affections subsequently. There was a tinge of sickly sallowness in his freckled complexion that gave one the impression of his being morally unwholesome. He had sandy hair and a straggling whisker, with that abomination of abominations, "a Newgate frill;" and, by the way, I resolved that my first show of interest in him should be to urge Cox to tell him to shave that off. There was a suggestion of impudence, too, in the snub of his nose—toned down, however, by some vacuity in his countenance, and belied, besides, by the air of deprecation that pervaded his general manners and demeanour. For the rest, he was dressed in a neat suit of tweeds, and might have passed either for a city clerk on a holiday, or the highly respectable young domestic that he was. Of course I said something civil and kind to him, and the chaplain a great deal more. He answered modestly and becomingly, saying very little himself. I remarked that he scarcely ever lifted his eyes to yours, and it was only by an effort that he got them as high as your necktie. Taking all things into consideration, however, perhaps that was natural and even commendable.

To a modest man, the worst of canoeing abroad is the popular excitement that invariably attends it. The 'Kölnische Zeitung' had intimated Cox's arrival on the Rhine; the 'Coblenzer Anzeiger' and the 'Bingen Post' had duly notified the passage of the Engländer; and of course we were the subjects of sundry paragraphs in the various journals that make their appearance in Mayence. Necessarily the boots or the boatman, or both, had betrayed the movements we had tried to keep secret; and the Germans, as they go early to bed, are an early-rising generation. At 5.30 next morning there were the elements of a crowd assembled before the Engländer Hof; and it swelled to something like a popular demonstration during the hundred yards or so we had to cover to the Rhine bank. For all that, previous experiences had prepared us; and had Abraham and I been alone, I should have borne it with tolerable philosophy. But I must say I resented the presence of Mr Lurcher, and felt my prepossessions against him getting the better of me again. You must have remarked that a cad never seems more caddish than when he comes nearest to the most primeval simplicity of costume—to woad, tattooing, skins, or fig-leaves; and Abraham's *protégé* in a low-cut jersey, showing a considerable expanse of bare neck behind, looked decidedly more like a "Jim" than a James, and as if he had been bred in Whitechapel in place of Belgravia. He was far from being the sort of figure one would have put forward as the type of the fine young English gentleman; and I felt that if the worthy Mainzers judged us by our company, they could hardly have thought much of either Abraham or myself.

It boots not to dwell on that tedious canoe-voyage on the choco-

late-coloured waters of the winding Main. The river would double back upon itself, like an eel twisting its folds round a fishing-line. Now we were turning our shoulders on the church-spire that had been our landmark ahead for the last hour or more: the eminences that had been looming on our port bow were shifted of a sudden to the larboard; and in the muddy maze of waters creeping far below the land-level, we got temporarily muddled as to the points of the compass. With the edge taken off the first excitement, the paddling became decidedly dull and monotonous, and frequently I was inclined to murmur at Abraham for having let me in for so tiresome a piece of work. But I was fairly caught; and the weather was pleasant though warm, and I had not the heart to bother him with my grumbling. For there he was, paddling ahead, and placidly happy, to all appearance, in the thought that he was steadily fining down in condition. As for Lurcher, I had no manner of doubt that he entirely sympathised with me. He worked ahead with dogged resolution, it is true; but there was sullenness in the very set of his shoulders, and suppressed irritation in the heavy breaths he drew when either of us happened to be near enough to hear him. When we stopped to picnic on the bank for rest and lunch, he was, perhaps, a less engaging object than in the morning, what with perspiration and an air of sulky disgust, which he made an effort to shake off when either of us was looking. Had I been his patron I should have felt moved to kick him; but Abraham regarded him with an expression of imperturbable benignancy, which I found almost as irritating as the gadflies.

"A little knocked up with the

heat and work, eh, James?" he observed, cheerily. "Well, never you mind, my lad; you'll sleep all the better and lunch none the worse."

James, like the Western philosopher in Bret Harte's ballad, who was doubled up in the scientific argument with the chunk of sandstone, "smiled a kind of sickly smile." He was smarting in the back and arms, he confessed, and he had a nasty rush of blood to the head, but he hoped he might always have strength to do his duty.

Whereupon Cox left off unpacking of the luncheon-hamper, to pay prompt attention to the interesting victim. He patted him pleasantly on the aching back; he dipped his own pocket-handkerchief in the stream, handing it to the martyr to bind round his forehead; and upon my word, I really believe that he took an opportunity of insidiously feeling his pulse. That was coming it rather too strong; and when Abraham remarked compassionately, "The poor fellow has the makings of a man in him, but certainly he does tire rather easily," I responded, with an unmistakable snarl, "It's just the very thing to do him good, if anything will; and the only pity is, that your *protégé* does not appreciate his privileges more. And I can't see, for the life of me, if he stood the work on the Rhine, why he should knock up on this overgrown ditch."

"Ah yes; by the way," said Abraham, with a blush, "I believe I forgot to mention that the Rhine was rather much for him. The fact is, that by the time we got to Coblenz, I thought he might possibly break down over the Lurlei and the Binger loch; so I packed him and his canoe on the rail, and sent him on to secure rooms at the Englischer Hof."

"Oh, indeed," I drily responded;

and I was glad to see Abraham blushing deeper. It was the first time I ever caught my worthy friend exhibiting anything approaching to a want of candour, and it made me think. It showed me that, to use a vulgar but significant phrase, he was far more spoony on this pet of his than I had fancied; and moreover, that for once he had an *arrière-pensée* that it was barely possible he was making a fool of himself.

If I had any doubt on the point, it was dissipated that day at dinner—or rather supper. We made our halt at the picturesque little village of Gemersheim, lying on the edge of a great stretch of woodland, where the highway touches a bend of the river. The Hirsch at Gemersheim was an old-fashioned hostelry, comfortable enough in its simple way. There was a small *gastzimmer* on one side of the entrance, and a spacious vaulted kitchen on the other; and the kitchen served as well for a *gaststube* for the humbler guests. The rough benches and tables that occupied one side of it were pretty fairly filled. There were peasants sipping their evening beer, and a pedlar or two busy with bread and sausages, and a stalwart forester in green and copper buttons, who, as we learned; was in the service of the lord of the soil, the high and well-born Graf von Herrenberg. It was just the sort of company where a citizen of the world, travelling with the idea of extending his acquaintances, might have been happy to eat his evening meal, and hoped, moreover, to get a very decent one. There was the less reason, then, for Abraham remarking to me with a manner he tried to make off-hand—

"Oh, by the way, old fellow, have you any objection to James sitting down with us to the *table d'hôte*?" We had been informed

that a *table d'hôte* supper was to be served at seven.

"What the deuce——" I began unceremoniously, when Abraham stopped me, with that genial, half-deprecating manner of his it was so very hard to resist.

"Yes, I know what you are going to say, and in other circumstances you would be right, of course. But I ask it now as a personal favour. I can see by his face that he's overdone, though, to do him justice, he says nothing about it; and his stomach is delicate, and there is a most abominable smell of *sauerkraut* and tobacco-smoke in that kitchen; and besides, for your sake as well as mine, I want him to be up to his work to-morrow."

Well, good-nature was always my weak point—at all events, there is nothing I detest more than differences of opinion with one's solitary travelling companion; and arguments on the eve of a German supper make assurance of indigestion doubly certain. I could always take precautions later against turning this into a precedent, and here at Gemersheim we would meet no company who were likely to be critical as to their *convives*. So I gave a reluctant consent with indifferent grace, and was rewarded by Cox's cordial gratitude.

Confound the sluggishness of the Teutonic temperament! Had the *wirth* told us but a moment sooner we should meet some of our country people at the coming meal, I should have made a resolute stand at once, and saved subsequent annoyance. The table in the great chamber was spread for nine: we found a couple of local dignitaries with napkins knotted into their button-holes, and Cox and I had hardly taken our seats, when in walked a gentlemanly-looking Englishman with a pair of very pretty daughters; while the party was made up with a well-

descended German Graf, who, indeed, was no less a personage than a scion of the House of Herrenberg, and whom the host marshalled with overpowering humility to the place at the head of the table. Cox would have kept a seat by us for Lurcher, who was late; but that arrangement I calmly ignored, and manœuvred one of the pretty English girls into the chair next to me, while her father and sister were seated opposite. I would willingly have ignored Mr Lurcher likewise. But that good-natured Cox, seeing his *protégé* ill at ease,—and small blame to him,—would insist on identifying him as one of us, by making some friendly remark to him. Whereupon I could see quick glances exchanged in the English family, as much as to say, "Who can these good people possibly be?" while the Graf, who had hitherto been condescendingly affable, stiffened visibly. However, our country folk were people of the world; we dropped into pleasant conversation with the father, and I began to make the running discreetly with my fair neighbour. She was clever, lively, and perfectly unaffected—only too lively indeed. For when that unlucky Lurcher began noisily spooning down his soup, in a style that was doubtless the fashion at Pentonhook, she was seized with what I must call a fit of the giggles. Her sister's black eyes were dancing with mirth, which seemed likely to brim over at any moment, till the mirth was changing to misery in the efforts she made to keep it down. And the Count, who was evidently *épris* of the beautiful Engländerin, ceased to be stiff and caught the infection, until in my mortification I almost forgot I was hungry; and if I ever sat upon thorns, most assuredly it was then. The girls were good-natured as well as well-bred, and made creditable efforts to

recover their gravity ; yet every now and then they had threatenings of a fresh paroxysm at some new *gaucherie* of James's. How he did hack and hew at his meat, and shovel down the *sauer-kraut* with the blade of his knife, and go hunting the prunes and the cherries round his plate. He was quick enough to comprehend the situation, and became less and less at his ease. I flatter myself that I exerted myself not altogether unsuccessfully to overcome the prejudices the companionship must have excited ; and we shook ourselves free from the incubus after supper, when we all adjourned in a body to the garden for coffee. But what might have been the more of a pleasure for its being so entirely unexpected, was comparatively spoiled ; and, in honour, I could give no explanations. My lips were sealed as to Lurcher's connection with us, and I had scruples as to placing Cox in a ridiculous light by saying that he had insisted on his servant dining with him.

To my fancy, there is nothing much finer in the way of river scenery than the Danube between Ratisbon and Passau. As when Campbell sang of the river, so it is still—lonely almost within sound of the rattle of the railways, and all the more lovable for man's neglect. A greater contrast to the Main can hardly be imagined than the swift, broad current of the rushing water—now sweeping round the base of a beetling precipice, now running in rapid shallows through the low highlands of a pastoral wilderness. You may be carried down the waterway for a league at a time without seeing even a herdsman or a forester on the "untrodden shore." And so long as we went smoothly though swiftly with the stream, and had merely to do a little easy naviga-

tion, Lurcher appeared to enjoy it amazingly. I can't say that Cox was very successful in bringing out his latent æsthetical instincts ; and he contemplated the woodland scenery and the occasional ruin of some picturesquely situated castle or convent with very moderate enthusiasm. But he paddled away in quiet animal enjoyment of the balmy air and the lazy exercise. I should say that he might have been perfectly happy had it not been for the ever-abiding apprehension of troubles and dangers ahead. But every now and then, when the canoe began to dance in the bubbling turmoil of incipient whirlpools, he showed unmistakable signs of alarm by the nervous jerking of the paddle ; and had it been a question of his safety in an awkward moment, I should have been sorry indeed to have insured him from shipwreck. What he felt, however, he kept to himself ; he said little or nothing, though he would sometimes shrink together : and I liked him all the better for not giving expression to his alarm. But all at once a more formidable sound came to our ears, though mellowed to a surly murmur by the distance ; and at the next sharp turn of the river we got a full front view of what awaited us. It was nothing very perilous, after all, when you made a calm survey of the hydrography. There was nothing in the rush that the small river-steamers were not in the habit of breasting daily ; and there was a side channel where the water flowed over shallows, where an upset need have no serious consequences to a fair swimmer. On that channel, Abraham, as commodore, decided at once. "I shall lead," he called out. "You can come next, Hooper, and leave Jim there to follow in your wake. There's nothing to be afraid of,

Jim," he added, encouragingly. "You know I've taught you to swim very well, and Mr Hooper and I will be below to wait for you."

We had been, during our rapid consultation, holding on to some reeds on the bank. Off he shot, accordingly, and I confess I followed him with malicious alacrity. For Abraham's *protégé* and my darling aversion was evidently infinitely more ill at ease than he had been at the *table d'hôte* the evening before. He balanced himself on the brink of the abyss like a crippled jackdaw on a perch, and there was an unpleasant scowl on his sallow face as he looked after the receding shoulders of his master. It was the sight of the scowl that hastened my departure, relieving me of my lingering compunction. There was nothing for the unfortunate James but to harden his heart, and commit himself to his destinies. And so, with muttered curses, he made a start in his turn; and when I had leisure to look over my shoulder and observe him, he reminded me of nothing so much as a monkey gone to sea in a washing-tub. His paddle seemed to sway wildly in the air, like the sails of an ill-regulated windmill; the canoe as often as not swung half-broadside on to the current; and it needed no great gift of prophecy to divine that he must come to inevitable grief.

So indeed it proved. When the canoe capsized and "spilled him in the drink," as the Americans say, he made some spasmodic attempts to strike out; but immediately he swallowed a gallon or so of water, lost nerve altogether, and came bobbing down the current. In that supreme crisis Abraham astonished me. It is true that, as we were both on the look-out, there was no actual danger. At the same time, his *protégé* was far more to be

pitied than when he complained of aches in the back on the Main a few days before. I fancy that Abraham was bracing himself to play the stoic, in the knowledge that his *protégé* was having a magnificent moral lesson. He knew we should bring the castaway to the shore somehow, and then he would be all the better man for the adventure and the escape. Calmly wading over the knees, his legs planted solidly apart, he calculated his distance and watched his opportunity. As Jim came swirling by, he reached out a powerful arm and caught him in a clutch of iron by the back of the neck. And I am bound to say that if James was as miserable as he looked when we laid him out upon the bank to dry, he must have been very wretched indeed. He disgorged a good deal of fluid, taking in a good deal more in the shape of cognac, and then he began to recover. Abraham hung over him like a mother over her child, and was as sympathising now as he had been impassive before. But the half-drowned rat we had been labouring to revive did anything but respond in a similar spirit. In his state of irritable semi-consciousness, I fancied I could read his real feelings; for this time there was no possibility of misinterpreting the malicious glare with which he looked up in the benign face of his benefactor,—so much so, that I could not help speaking of it subsequently to Cox. Of course I might as well have spared my pains. Indeed Abraham spoke decidedly sharply for him. "My good fellow, you have always been hard on him. No man could be expected to look pleasant in the circumstances, and I begin to be sorry I let him risk such a fright. We overdid the training, and that is the fact. Besides," he added, after a moment, "even if the lad is not

all we could wish him to be, I have reasons for sticking to him—and stick to him I will."

Naturally, the convalescent and his canoe—which we had succeeded in rescuing as well as himself—were comfortably forwarded per train to Vienna. There the remorseful philanthropist did all in his power to console him for that *mauvais quart d'heure* and its consequences. For Jim had made the most of his ducking and his fright—getting up, as it struck me, very creditably, a short, hacking cough, and inventing a hectic flush which, for the life of me, I could never detect. When he had not his meals served in his chamber, he was content with a seat at the couriers' table in the luxurious Imperial Hotel. But, *au revanche*, we took him about with us to see many of the sights, and did our best to brighten him while improving his mind. What cheered him up most were the beer-gardens and *cafés*, where Cox used to have him seated at an adjoining table, and saw his wants carefully attended to. For a man with severe theories as to condition, Abraham believed firmly in beer; and there his *protégé* thoroughly agreed with him. That was all very well; and I, for one, should not have been hard on him on that account, admiring Herr Dreher and his brewery as I do. What I disliked more was his demeanour when we took him to the Schatzkammer. It is one of the choicest collections of artistic rarities in the world; the Viennese assert that it is even superior to the more famous Grüne Gewölbe of Dresden. It was not to be expected that Jim should show any great enthusiasm over the miniature masterpieces of exquisite sculpture. But for Cox's sake, and the hopes of his moral experiment, I hardly liked the ugly lustre of his *protégé's* eyes as they lighted up

over gems of priceless value. He seemed fully to appreciate the value of a tiny cup chiselled out of a single emerald. I could realise his raptures had he been permitted to bathe hands covered with bird-lime in some of the trays of brilliants and opals. Had I believed in the Pythagorean dogma of the metempsychosis, I could have fancied that the soul of Jonathan Wild was animating the body of Mr James Lurcher.

We embarked our canoes on a goods-van from Vienna for Paris, and worked westwards ourselves through Tyrol to Switzerland. On the way I had no just cause to complain of Mr Lurcher's company—though all the same, as a measure of instinctive precaution, I locked my portmanteau at the hotel more scrupulously than I was usually in the habit of doing. I heartily assented to Cox's notion that it was unwise to expose James to unnecessary temptation. Once, indeed, I availed myself of the ex-convict's experience by submitting a suspicious gold coin to his inspection, when he pronounced unhesitatingly against its genuineness, in the hope, as I fancied, that I should hand it over to him—a hope which, by the way, proved altogether fallacious.

It chanced to be an unfortunate season for a novice making his *début* in the higher Alps. The snow was lying late and deep in the passes, while latterly a rainfall and a low temperature conspired to make them unusually impracticable. The gloom of the season had cast its shadows upon Wildheuer's cheery face when we met him by appointment at the Bear Hotel in Grindelwald. His face brightened, though, when he and Cox got to talking over old times and excursions; and the hope that springs eternal in the human breast animated them with the prospect of new adventures.

Of course Cox insisted on James being present at these exciting consultations. He wished to put the youth in heart for mountaineering; he was persuaded that enthusiasm must prove contagious; and he knew, besides, that that daring yet sagacious guide was a perfect treasure-house of mountain experience. So far as James had tried anything above the snow-line, he did not appear to take very kindly to the work. We had taken him over some smallish things already, and in proportion as he mounted above the snow, spirits and courage seemed rather to desert him. Even on ledges that were far from dizzy for average mortals, he showed neither the confidence nor the sure-footedness of the chamois. And at any sudden turn on a most practicable path round a precipice, he would puff and blow, and show changes of colour, that were more than mere shortness of breath should account for. Yet never for a moment did Abraham profess to lose faith in his pupil's capabilities. No woman eager to make the best of some unworthy object of her affections was ever more ingenious in inventing excuses; and there must have been something touching to the most cynical mind in the hopes with which he clung to his *protégé*.

So he had all the air of having arranged a most agreeable surprise when one evening at the Grimsel, when the weather showed signs of amendment, he intimated to the youth an expedition for the next day.

"We have only showed you the fringes of the Alps yet, young fellow; but if the weather holds up to-morrow I have a real pleasure in store for you."

Whereupon Mr Lurcher's face was a picture. With the shadows and the ghastly lights flitting about it, it reminded one of a mountain-

top in a summer thunder-shower. Intense disgust and deadly apprehension were most vividly depicted turn by turn; but at the same time, the predominating sense of self-interest induced him to control his feelings and brace his mind for the worst. In internal soliloquy he probably said to himself that there was no disputing his benefactor's crotchets: by insisting upon backing out of this affair, he would have run a risk he hardly cared to encounter; and if he were bound to go through with it, it would be as well to assume the serenity he was as far as possible from feeling.

I know not what Abraham may have thought; at all events, he made a show of seeing nothing. And he went on with unimpaired cheerfulness—

"Yes, Wildheuer half believes in some fine weather at last; and if he should turn out to be in the right, we are going over the Strahleck. We shall take it easy: make our start in the afternoon, sleeping in the little hut over the Aar glacier; and the morning after, if all goes well, you shall climb the ice-wall and cross the Strahleck. So you had better turn in early, and see you have a good night."

Judging by Mr Lurcher's looks next morning, I should say he had paid the usual attention to such kindly and well-meant advice. He may have enjoyed such rest as the criminal the night before his execution. And though I knew he must have been a drag on the party in any case, as it was, I felt a moral conviction that we should have good reason for gratitude if we ever got him to Grindelwald. I should have said as much to Abraham had I not already taken my part and resigned myself to my destiny. And if I did not have it out with Cox, it was no use talking to Wildheuer, who had shrugged his shoulders with elo-

quent significance when he heard that Lurcher was to be one of us. Wildheuer already saw how the land lay; but he was too loyally devoted to Abraham to protest against any of his fancies, unless, indeed, it had been a question of life and death.

We made out, *tant bien que mal*, the mounting to the rickety hut under a rock overhanging the lower Aar glacier. That was mere drudgery, or little more. And James, who, as I have said already, was sufficiently wiry of body, had plodded up the slopes of yielding snow, though at a considerable expenditure of snorts and groans. But perhaps he might have accommodated himself with a better grace to the inconveniences to which we had to submit at our night quarters. It was bitter cold after sunset, and we had driving showers of hail and sleet, which were forced by the fierce gusts of the wind through the innumerable chinks and crannies. The supper was unsatisfactory, being tepid or cold, as we had the choice between trying to nurse up a fire in the open, and stifling ourselves with wood-smoke within the cabin; and the wine of the Valais, as it always has, had the subacid flavour of earth, and was iced into the bargain to a most unpalatable temperature. Assuredly there was no Dutch courage to be drawn from it, and nothing but the exhilaration from adventure in prospect could have sent one cheerfully to some mouldering hay that was to do duty for a bed.

Abraham threw himself down on the unsavoury truss, and was locked almost instantaneously in the arms of Morpheus. For myself, I can only frankly confess that I seldom if ever sleep in such circumstances; and had I cherished any hopes of having a tolerable night, they would have been speedily

dissipated by the neighbourhood of Lurcher. No doubt our tiny bed-fellows were lively, and the melancholy howling of the winds was anything rather than soporific. Yet Lurcher need not have bemoaned his fortunes and cursed everything in general in such a distinctly audible key. To be sure, I pulled him up very sharply, though taking care to abuse him in a whisper, for fear of awakening my friend. But neither remonstrances nor threats could calm his restlessness, and all the time my imagination would run riot in interpreting the probable course of his thoughts. When Wildheuer came to rouse us in the morning, I felt more kindly towards Mr Lurcher than ever.

A hurried snack of bread, cold mutton, and coffee, and we took our fresh departure at 2.30. Happily the weather had continued to clear, and some drifting veils of gauzy vapour hardly dimmed the glories of a brilliant morn or the sparkle of the stars where the heavens were unclouded. We struck down across the glacier to mount by the *moraine* in the middle. It was a rough and fatiguing scramble, but nothing more. We had to find our way somehow over the huge blocks, that were sticky and slippery after the recent sleet. None of us were much inclined for conversation; and except for an occasional mysterious sound from the solemn recesses of the snow-slopes, or the murmuring of the rills in their subterranean channels, the only interruption to the silence was an occasional growl when any of the party missed his footing. Mr Lurcher lost his legs more often than any of us, but still he picked himself up and proceeded.

Suddenly there burst upon us a transformation-scene that inspired us with fresh life and spirits. The summits that had been silvered by

the moonshine caught the first faintness of a rosy flush that gradually spread and deepened. The reflection of the dawn came lower and lower, while the moonlight was still sleeping on the opposite crests; and then the sun appeared in all his glory over the grand peaks to the right of us. Everything that had hitherto blushed rosy-red was blazing in a sheathing of burnished gold, while the depths of the glacier-beds in the valleys beneath were enveloped in shadows that seemed the blacker by contrast. The very guides were impressed. Wildheuer stood leaning on his alpenstock, sniffing the freshening breath of the morning like a chamois buck or the ghost of Hamlet's father. James remained impenetrable and imperturbable as the porters, who had taken advantage of the brief halt to slip the burthens from their shoulders. To be sure, he said, "Ah, sir, it's most lovely!" when Cox insisted on calling his attention to it; but I saw that he forced out the ejaculation under a sense of intense injury.

We might have all enjoyed the scenery more had we been able to take the walking more easily. But soon we were breasting the shelving curves of the Finsteraar glacier, and uncommonly stiff they were. There was no danger to speak of, but there was an infinity of insignificant crevasses, which we had to stride across or to turn. And so low as this, the snow continued to be sloppy; so that the scaling became exceedingly laborious. Still Mr Lurcher's bodily strength stood him in good stead, and he showed no signs of breaking down. But the sighs that broke from his heaving bosom came heavier and heavier: with a dodginess that did his resources considerable credit, he was always hitting on pretexts for a check,—now he was tying a boot-

lace; now he was casting enraptured glances behind; and then Abraham was only too willing to wait for him; and again he would answer to an imaginary call, and come to a standstill till the matter was cleared up. And the desponding looks he cast up towards the ridge before us ought to have moved any heart that was not of stone.

However, everything must have an end, and so had that slow ascent. We found no serious difficulties on the famous ice-wall—that year it chanced to be easy; and the famous *bergschrand* was so solidly bridged over that one might have passed without suspecting its existence. It was only here and there we cut a short flight of steps in its frozen face—which was just as well, by the way, as I marked a nervous quivering in Mr Lurcher's limbs when he saw the ice-axe called into requisition. We admired the view, of course, with its magnificent foreground and the brilliant middle distances, of tumbling rivulets and cascades of ice swelling into glacier rivers and estuaries, till they discharged themselves in torrents in the expanse of the widening lakes, which were lost to our sight in the windings of the valleys. But the day was glorious, and the view would keep; and the sharp calls of the stomach silenced the raptures of the soul.

"Let us buckle to breakfast—luncheon—whatever you like to call it," said Abraham, heartily. "If I know anything of your constitution, Hooper, you must have been ravening hours ago; and as for you, James, my poor fellow, it's high time you recruited with a 'square' meal. You needn't laugh, Hooper; he isn't hardened to this kind of thing like you; and now that I come to try it a second time, I doubt the Strahleck was a stiff bit of work to set him to."

"It's made me stiff and sore too," whined James, lugubriously. "I've such stitches in my back and side as never were; and as for my legs and arms, I feel as if the bones were broken in them. Please, sir, will it be very long before we get there, when once we fairly start to go down?"

"Long! Lord bless you, my good lad,—that's to say, not very long," he added, catching himself quickly.

But I knew as well as he that it would take us eight good hours 'at the shortest, if we made no quicker way than we had done hitherto; and I began to have grave misgivings as to the likelihood of James holding out. He had bodily strength enough, it was clear; and so far Abraham was justified in having set him to such a task as the Strahleck, which, though toilsome, could scarcely be called perilous. But it was just as plain that he was chicken-hearted, though he had a tolerable head of his own; and endurance without pluck and enjoyment goes but a short half-way in the higher Alps.

"Why, you seem to be off your feed, James," ejaculated Abraham, anxiously. "Do pass him a thigh of that chicken, Hooper; it goes down more easily than the cold mutton." And for once I shared Abraham's anxiety, for I thought it an ominous sign when Lurcher, after long fasting and exercise, turned a cold shoulder to the contents of the luncheon-sack. If he did not eat to keep up his forces, the rest of us would have to carry him before all was over. On the other hand, he was very ready to drink; and though Abraham began by lacing his cups for him, subsequently he had to lay an embargo on the brandy.

"Take care, James, my lad; mind how you take spirits on an

empty stomach." And indeed the warning came none too soon, for James was waxing unpleasantly lively.

While the descent lay over banks of snow, we accomplished it swiftly and easily enough. At first, where it was really steep, we took it gingerly; but afterwards, as the slopes became gentler, we went in for glissades. I remarked that James had provided himself with a spirit-flask, from which he repeatedly took stealthy sips; so I took an early opportunity of relieving him of it, when his jodellings were silenced in a fit of the sulks. At last we were brought up by an *impasse* among the lower rocks, and turned aside to strike down on the glacier. That was more easily decided upon than done. There was rather an ugly abyss yawning round the side of it, which we traced backwards for some considerable distance without its appearing to get any more practicable. However, it was hardly worth while searching farther, for the guides pronounced the passage safe enough with very ordinary precautions. So the rope was called into requisition—we had only used it once or twice on the other side of the pass—and carefully attached to our persons. Wildheuer took the jump first, next Cox, and then a porter, and finally myself; so we had grouped ourselves into a most solid *point d'appui* on the ledge on the Grimsel brink. Next came Lurcher's turn. Animated by our example he took the leap lightly enough, but somehow he slipped and jumped a little short, coming down upon a shelving cornice of rotten snow. It crumbled beneath his boots and he subsided into the chasm, to be brought up with a jerk. There was no real danger, and we hauled him up again by main force, although his hands were slightly

scored in the operation. But what a change was there, when he was landed in safety on the glacier! The fictitious courage that came from the cognac had all evaporated, and his pulses were going at a fitful gallop. The colour had faded from his cheeks, and his eyes stared blankly into vacancy. Well, we rubbed him down and tried to cheer him up, and administered another dose of stimulant; and then, as we were all getting impatient, we forced him to set himself in motion. Unluckily this part of the glacier was a good deal crevassed, and he took to craning at each of the transverse rifts. Fortunately they were so narrow that, by seizing him under the armpits and applying judicious pressure from behind, we had no great difficulty in lifting him along. But we were losing precious time, and the strain on the temper was becoming insupportable. Mine went altogether. "That precious *protégé* of yours is a regular Jonah, Cox. He has been playing the very mischief with us all through our trip, and now he is spoiling as promising an expedition as ever a couple of gentlemen started on. Thanks to him, we shall have to spend the night in the open, if we don't leave our bones in the glacier, as appears likely enough."

The softness of Abraham's answer should have turned away the wrath of any man. He apologised so humbly for his indiscretion and the shortcomings of his pet, that I felt my lips must be sealed till we came through our troubles. And my ill-humour was turned in upon myself, so far as I could not relieve it in smothered execrations on Lurcher. How we did labour under a glaring sun at dragging his limp dead-weight along! Now and again we made him rally for a bit, but he seemed to have lost the power of sus-

tained motion. Wildheuer did his duty like a man; and in his genial *camaraderie* for Cox, he uttered no word of complaint. But his influence after a time failed to pacify his followers, and the porters fairly struck for extra pay, which we were obliged to promise them then and there.

Meanwhile Lurcher grew limper and limper.

There can be no question that he was quite conscious enough to go through a period of actual suffering. Each slight effort he made for himself was a pain to him; and possibly judging others by himself, he was in deadly apprehension of being dropped and left behind. At least he was muttering entreaties that we should not desert him, while we were steadily dragging at him by relays with a purchase of several horse-power. It was lucky that he put off swooning till we had wellnigh cleared the glacier; and shortly after we had revived him, we emerged upon some pastures that lay like an oasis of emerald among the surrounding snows.

Though the sun was sloping to the west, there were several hours of light before us; and had we only been unencumbered, as we ought to have been, we might have turned up comfortably for supper at the Grimsel. As it was, going further was not to be dreamed of, and we thought ourselves lucky in lighting upon some deserted *châlets*. It was not a cheerful look-out at the best. The hungry porters had devoured the cold meat, and in the circumstances we did not care to grumble at them. One ration of bread among the seven would have reduced itself to something like a couple of ounces per man; and we had each to be mulcted in a portion of that, to contribute to the better nourishment of the invalid. Abraham never showed to more advantage. I admired him more than

ever, and so I am sure did Wildheuer. He had consolatory and apologetic words for everybody, while he monopolised the post of sick-nurse to the invalid; and if he was up once in the night, he must have been on foot at least a score of times.

Next morning, setting out betimes, we got our helpless Jonah safely down—sending a messenger for a *chaise-d-porteur*, which met us when carrying became practicable. And at Grindelwald we lifted Lurcher into the bed, from which he did not rise for a day or two. He had a sharp attack of fever, which communicated itself to the brain, and for the first day and night was delirious. Unsatisfied with the best local advice, Abraham insisted upon sending for a Berne doctor; and that distinguished practitioner prescribed care and repose, and journeying by easy stages afterwards. Aggravating as it was, there was nothing for it but patience, for I felt bound to see Abraham through his bother. My duties were chiefly confined to trying to be pleasant company to him; for, as before, he did almost everything for the convalescent. His systems of moral discipline and physical training may have been

rashly applied; and I could have forgiven his pupil for being inclined to kick at them: but putting the circumstances of their original connection out of the question, if ever a man earned the gratitude of a fellow-mortal, surely Cox had a right to the devotion of Lurcher. Had I seen the patient in any way disposed to acknowledge the debt, my personal feelings might have softened to him. But, weighed in the balance, he was found wanting, and something more. If there is *veritas in vino*, so there is in a brain attack; and while he was recovering his senses, although still something light-headed, he showed malignity rather than mere aversion to his benefactor. Whether Cox perceived that, I cannot say; I had no heart to speak to him on the subject. Being far from deficient in shrewdness or good sense, I imagine he could hardly fail to have remarked it; though I do not doubt that that indomitable good-nature of his made all manner of ingenious excuses for the ungrateful one. But I took leave of them at Berne on their homeward journey, in the conviction that where my friend had been sowing charity broadcast, he was likely to reap nothing save thorns and thistles.

ON SOME OF SHAKESPEARE'S FEMALE CHARACTERS :

BY ONE WHO HAS PERSONATED THEM.

II.—PORTIA.

BRYNTYSILJO, NEAR LLANGOLLEN,
1st September 1880.

"In Belmont is a lady richly left."

It is such a pleasure to me, dear friend, to do anything to beguile your thoughts from the pain and weariness of your sick-bed, that I will try at once to carry out your wish, and put on paper some of the ideas which have guided me in representing Portia. Your letter tells me that she is "one of your great heroines," and that you desire to hear about her most of all. I am very glad to know you hold her to be a "real, typical, great lady and woman." This is my own thought. I have always classed her with Vittoria Colonna, Cassandra Fedele, and women of that stamp; and I have loved her all the more, perhaps, that from the days of Shakespeare to our own the stage has done her but scanty justice.

But it is of little moment to consider how far away from Shakespeare has been the Portia of the English stage, as we gather from its annals. Rather should we try to form a clear and definite conception of her character, and of her influence upon the main incidents of the play, by a conscientious study of her in the leaves of the great master's "unvalued book." This, then, is how she pictures herself to my thoughts.

I have always looked upon her as a perfect piece of nature's handiwork. Her character combines all the graces of the richest womanhood with the strength of purpose, the

wise helpfulness, and sustained power of the noblest manhood. Indeed, in this instance, Shakespeare shows us, that it is the woman's keener wit and insight which sees into and overcomes the difficulty which has perplexed the wisest heads in Venice. For, without a doubt, as it seems to me at least, it is to her cultivated and bright intelligence, and not alone to the learned Bellario, her cousin, that Bassanio is indebted for the release of his friend Antonio.

She comes before us at a time when, like another sweet Italian lady, she has "seen no age, nor known no sorrow." Alas for the sad fate which awaits poor Desdemona! But Portia has known no sorrow while we know her, and we leave her in the gratified joy of having given to her husband not only "her house, her servants, and herself," but of having also, by her fine intelligence, rescued and restored to him his best-loved friend and kinsman.

To know how she has been able to do this, we must go back to her youth. I think of her as the cherished child of a noble father—a father proud of his child's beauty, and of the promise which he sees in her of rare gifts of mind and heart. The latter he spares no pains to foster. He is himself no ordinary man. He anticipates the danger to which

the beautiful and wealthy heiress may be exposed; and it was by one of those "good inspirations" which, as Nerissa says, "holy men have at their death," that he fixes upon the device of the three caskets, "whereof who chooses his meaning, chooses" his beloved daughter.

From the first his thoughts have been to train her to succeed him in his high position. With this view he has surrounded her with all that is beautiful in art and ennobling in study, and placed her in the society of scholars, poets, soldiers, statesmen, the picked and noblest minds of her own and other lands. Amidst this throng of honoured guests, not the least honoured, we may be sure, was the learned "cousin, Dr Bellario." This cousin we may believe to have been a constant visitor at princely Belmont; and indeed to have been her instructor in jurisprudence—a not unfitting branch of the future heiress of Belmont's education. One can imagine the girl Portia rushing to him for help in some youthful perplexity, and how charmed he must have been by the hopeful dawning of that "intuitive decision of a bright and thorough-edged intellect," of which she was afterwards to give so signal a proof. It is obvious, at any rate, that she took an interest in his pursuits. Perhaps they have, even in those early days, "turned over many books together," and so she may have in some measure unconsciously fitted herself for the great task which awaited her in the future.

Her father may have seen with pleased surprise the bias of her mind towards such studies; and this, as well as her affection for her learned teacher, may have led him to take her to some of the famous trials of the day, so that when her own hour of trial comes, when heart and head must alike be strong, and her self-

possession is taxed to the uttermost, she knows at least the forms of the court, and through no technical ignorance would be likely to betray herself. If this were not so, how could she, however assured of her power to overcome the Jew, have dared to venture into the presence of such an assembly as that "great court of Venice," where any failure would have been disastrous not merely to herself but to Bellario?

Thus richly left, richly endowed, we find her, by her wise father's will, not allowed to "choose one nor refuse none," but forced to submit to be wooed, and sought by "renowned suitors" "whom the four winds blow in from every coast." She feels this to be hard; but so deep is her reverence for her father, that she has schooled herself to bow implicitly to his will. "If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will." She tells us, in her own playful way, how little the various "suitors who are already come" have won upon her,—the Neapolitan prince who loves, and "doth nothing but talk of his horse;" the young county Palatine who "smiles not," "doth nothing but frown," and is full of "unmannerly sadness;" the French lord, M. le Bon, who is "every man in no man," and who, in imitating all, has ended by retaining no individuality. But one thing he must have been,—amusing; and we may be sure, that in after-times he will not unfrequently be a guest at Belmont. Then, after descriptions of the English, the Scottish, and the German suitors, with their peculiarities hit off to a nicety, we find her prettily excusing herself by saying, "In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker." But there is no malice in her mind. Her descriptions make us see the

that the "good inspiration," which devised this choice of caskets, may prove itself in the choice of the one "who shall rightly love"! Hard it is for her to know the right casket, and yet to give no hint; and not only not be herself "forsworn," but by ordering her suite "to stand all aloof," far apart from the caskets, to insure that no accident shall, unintentionally on the part of a bystander, direct Bassanio's choice!

With what a heart-leap she finds him choose the right casket! with what excess of happiness!

"O love, be moderate, allay thy ecstasy,
In measure rain thy joy, scant this excess;
I feel too much thy blessing, make it less,
For fear I surfeit!"

Then, when Bassanio comes to claim her according to the "gentle scroll," how frankly and nobly she gives him not only all he asks—herself—but her very all—with the desire that she could be "trebled *twenty times* herself"—"in virtues, beauties, livings, friends, exceed account"!

And now when congratulations are over, and their happiness appears complete, the evil news arrives, brought by Bassanio's friends Salario, Lorenzo, and Jessica, of the overthrow of Antonio's fortune;—that all his ventures have failed;—that the time has gone by within which the bond might be redeemed, and that nothing can drive the inexorable Jew "from the envious plea of forfeiture, of justice and his bond." Thus all at once comes the test which is to show that the union of Portia with Bassanio is indeed a "marriage of true minds." It is enough that Antonio is the bosom friend of Bassanio,—"the semblance of his soul,"—to assure her that he is worthy to be hers also. For, in her own words—

"In companions
That do converse and waste the time
together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of
love,
There must be needs a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners, and of spirit."

Moreover, what a picture of that friend has Bassanio given!

"The dearest friend to me; the kindest
man;
and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears,
Than any that draws breath in Italy."

At first, Portia evidently does not realise the extent of the Jew's malignity. She feels that, at any sacrifice, he must be bought over to cancel his bond, and she believes that this is possible. After having read Antonio's letter, she has but one thought,—to hasten Bassanio's departure, with ample means to satisfy the Jew. But first she must give him the right to use her means as his own; he must *indeed be lord of all*.

"First, go with me to church, and call
me wife:
And then away to Venice to your friend."

During the time, brief as it can be made, of the preparation for the marriage ceremony, Portia will have heard all the particulars of the "merry bond;" she will have discovered that money alone, however squandered, cannot shake the obdurate Jew's determination. Accustomed, as I have before suggested, by her peculiar training, to look with a judicial mind upon serious matters, she, after many questionings about its terms, by a happy instinct, I believe, hits upon the flaw in the bond. She will say nothing of this to Bassanio; but hurries him away with her wealth to use as his own, and then herself hastens to Padua, after despatching an *avant-courier* to Bellario, with a letter informing him of her ap-

proach, as well as of her belief that she has found a flaw in the bond, and requesting his presence at the trial.

We find her, before her departure, in the lightest spirits, feeling virtually assured of success, and even jesting in her new happiness with Nerissa, as to who shall

"Prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear her dagger with a braver grace."

This state of mind, it appears to me, could not have been possible, had Portia known what was before her. She is at ease, because she is sure of the full sympathy of her friend and cousin Bellario, and counts with confidence on his presence in Venice to assist her; and so, after giving her house into the care of Lorenzo and Jessica, who are to be treated in their absence as Lord Bassanio and herself, she goes gaily on to Padua with Nerissa. They must haste away, for they "must measure twenty miles to-day."

In the play we see that Portia sends Balthazar, her trusty servant whom she has "ever found honest, true," to Dr Bellario with her letter of instructions, and bids him wait for her at "the trajet,* the common ferry which trades to Venice." But either her mind must have changed, or she must have met messengers from Bellario on the road, who tell her of his illness and inability to help her in person. Consequently she hurries on to Padua; but when they meet—for that they do meet is certain—all her first joyful anticipations receive a woeful shock. She finds her dear old friend grievously sick. What is to be done? There is no help

near; no time to be lost! The Jew "plies the Duke at morning and at night." Bellario's aid, she learns, has been summoned already by the Duke as a last resource. In this extremity, with no other help at hand, Bellario proposes that Portia shall go in his stead, recommended by him as a "young doctor of Rome," then visiting him. This must be done, or all is lost. Bellario confirms her belief as to the flaw in the bond, and furnishes her with his "own opinions" upon all the points of law most vital to the question. They "turn o'er many books together," and Portia proceeds to Venice, furnished, as Bellario writes to the Duke, with the Doctor's opinion, "which, bettered with his own learning (the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend), goes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your Grace's request in my stead." All this suggests to me that Portia's eye had been the first to see the flaw in the bond, and that her own impression had been confirmed by the great lawyer.

Grave and anxious must have been her thoughts as she crossed the lagunes by "the common ferry that trades to Venice." Hers was not a mind, however, to shrink before difficulty; and, confirmed as she has been by the opinion of the great doctor of laws, she feels sure of success, if she can but be true to herself, and "forget she is a woman." All the gay light-heartedness with which she started from Belmont has vanished under this unexpected aspect of affairs. With what trepidation, with what anxious sense of responsibility, must she find herself engaged in such

* One of the most persistent errors of the text, carried on from the first folio, is "tranect," when Shakespeare evidently wrote "traject," the equivalent for "traghetto," the word which may be seen at every ferry in Venice—"Traghetto della Salute," &c.

a task—the mark for every eye, the “observed of all observers”! Nothing but her deep love and grateful happy heart could sustain her through such a trial. To cease to be a woman for the time, is not so hard perhaps to one who has all her life been accustomed to a position of command and importance; but, in the peculiar circumstances of this case, the effort must have been one of extreme difficulty.

How skilfully, firmly, and gently she begins her task! We may believe that she had some sympathy with Shylock. She has lately made his undutiful daughter welcome, because she is wedded to her husband’s friend. She cannot approve of Jessica’s uncalled-for accusation of her father:—

“I have heard him swear
That he would rather have Antonio’s flesh,
Than twenty times the value of the sum
That he did owe him.”

But, with her usual thoughtful kindness, she feels for the stranger Jewess, and during her own absence puts her in a position in which her servants must show her all respect.

Jessica must have had, no doubt, a sad enough life after her mother’s death. We see that Shylock was not of a nature to win love or respect from those immediately about him. Meanness and distrust were in the atmosphere which he made around him in his home life. She says, “Our house is hell.” That she can, despite her training, appreciate goodness and virtue, may be inferred from what she says of Portia:—

“Why, if two gods should play some
 heavenly match,
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something
 else
Pawn’d with the other; for the poor rude
 world
Hath not her fellow.”

Still I believe Portia to have more sympathy with the Jew than with his daughter. She feels for the race that has been proscribed, insulted, execrated, from generation to generation. She finds some excuse for the deep hereditary hate which the Jew has for his Christian oppressor, and for his desire of vengeance in the name and for the sake of his persecuted tribe. She would have understood his yearning for the death of the man who had “disgraced and hindered him of half a million;” but not that he himself should desire to be the cruel executioner.

The Duke, in his opening address to Shylock, tells him what it is “thought” he will do:—

“That thou but lead’st this fashion of
 thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then, ’tis
 thought,
Thou’lt show thy mercy, and remorse,
 more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty,” &c.

As if the “stony adversary, the inhuman wretch,” had been keeping up the show of enforcing the letter of his bond out of mere wantonness! The “gentle answer” expected was not likely to be given after such an appeal: a much less merciless adversary would not have been moved by it. Who likes it to be taken for granted that he is going to do a good action?—to be told that it is expected? Such an appeal would be likely to make even a gentle nature perverse. The treatment of the Jew by the friends of Antonio is also little calculated to bend him from his purpose. It would only, if possible, harden his heart still more.

At this point enters the “young doctor of Rome, his name Balthasar.” We may conceive the angry eyes with which the Jew looks at him. But instead of in-

sulting and taunting him like the rest, and as he had expected, the stranger simply asks if he is Shylock, and says, "Of a strange nature is the suit you follow,"—thus putting him at his ease, and securing Shylock's attention by his assurance "that the Venetian law cannot impugn him" in acting as he did. Antonio is asked if he confesses the bond. He does. Then the climax seems to have been reached. The "something else" is kept in the background until every other argument has failed. The Jew must now take the initiative. The young doctor owns that they are in his power. He is in the right,—confessed by all to be so; and *therefore* he can afford to be—he "*must be merciful*." The rude, unmannerly answer of the Jew, "On what compulsion must I? tell me that," is met with grave gentleness. This quality of mercy must not be "strained." There is no compulsion in it: of its own sweet will it "droppeth upon the place beneath." The blessing it brings is to the giver as well as to the receiver: its region is beyond and above kingly sceptres; it is in the hearts of the highest ones of earth, and is an attribute of "God Himself,"—his God as well as the Christian's,—the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.

In Portia is here embodied the spirit of good, which it is her first, her paramount desire should prevail over the spirit of evil. She would gladly have given largely of her fortune to turn Shylock from his cruel purpose,—to give him an insight into the happiness, the blessedness, of showing mercy and forgiveness. She who has lately been made so happy in her gratified love, what would she not give, out of her full heart, to prove her gratitude to the All-Giver, and

soften for His use, however little that might be, this one human heart?

After this sublime appeal, the Jew is again assured of the "justice of his plea," so that his sacrifice in giving it up shall be the nobler. He is only asked to "mitigate" it: at some (perhaps not far-off) time he may have to pray to his God for mercy, and the thought of that same needful prayer should surely teach him "to render the deeds of mercy." This, alas! only brings from his stubborn heart the cry—

"My deed's upon my head! I crave the
law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond."

Then the temptation of money is held out to him. The loan is to be paid thrice—nay, "ten times," over. To no avail. Portia, as a last resource, tries to bring before his mind's eye the horror of the deed,—the gash, the quivering flesh, which is to be "cut off nearest the merchant's heart"—the seat of life. She sees in imagination the fainting, dying man, and, with a shudder, turns to Shylock, and bids him at least have by a surgeon to stop the wounds, "lest he do bleed to death." No, not even that. "'Tis not in the bond." He will not do even "thus much for charity." Now all is clear.

At this point, I have always felt in the acting that my desire to find extenuations for Shylock's race and for himself leaves me, and my heart grows as stony as his own. I see his fiendish nature fully revealed. I have seen the knife sharpened to cut quickly through the flesh; the scales brought forward to weigh it; have watched the cruel eager eye, all strained and yearning to see the gushing blood welling from the side "nearest the heart," and gloating over the fancied agonies and death-

pangs of his bitter foe. This man-monster, this pitiless savage nature, is beyond the pale of humanity: it must be made powerless to hurt. I have felt that with him the wrongs of his race are really as nothing compared with his own remorseless hate. He is no longer the wronged and suffering man; and I long to pour down on his head the "justice" he has clamoured for, and will not do without.

The Jew has been probed to the uttermost. It is now clear, beyond all question, that it is Antonio's *life* which this "merry bond" is intended to purchase, and nothing short of it will satisfy Shylock's "lodged hate." He has by his own confession brought his life within the compass of the law. Then, like a crushing avalanche, slowly but surely sweeps down upon him the avenging, much-forgiving power, the "something else" which has hitherto been held in hand by the young doctor. Then the blood, which "is not in the bond," which has not been bargained for, flows in to wash away the bond (better now it had been torn up, as Portia wished), and to bring on the murderous Jew his just punishment, the forfeiture of life, wealth, substance, all. Then the blood which he had so yearned to shed, but has overlooked in the bond, is ordained to be the Nemesis which shall overwhelm and destroy him, sweep him from his pride of place among his tribe, rob him of half his dearly-gotten wealth, and take away his desire to accumulate more, by forcing him to leave it at his death to the gentleman who "lately stole his daughter."

Blow upon blow! For now as a crowning shame he must go through the form of being made a Christian. We may be sure that Portia would not have included this in the judg-

ment which she pronounces as the mouthpiece of the Court. It is Antonio, who, when asked by her, "What mercy can you render him, Antonio?" after disposing of his substance, and requesting that the fine should be reduced from the whole to one half of his goods, closes with the stipulation that "for this favour he presently become a Christian." This looks like a piece of cruelty, unworthy of Antonio's character. Can he believe that the mere name of Christian could "soften that (than which what's harder?) his Jewish heart?" And yet one cannot accuse Antonio of malignity. "A kinder gentleman treads not the earth," say his friends, and those who know him best. We must not take Shylock's report of him. He speaks out of the hate he bears him, because of his interference with what he calls his "well-won thrift." Antonio "has brought down the rate of usance," helped the poor, wrested from his grasp despairing wretches whom he would have stripped of their all, then thrown aside to starve, or die as they might.

"He seeks my life: his reason well I know;
I oft delivered from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me:
Therefore he hates me."

When Antonio asks that Shylock shall be made a Christian, we must remember that he has only just escaped the sharpened knife which, in imagination, had been already tasting his life-blood. Still, even this would not make wilfully cruel this

"Kindest man,
The best condition'd and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies."

We must take his demand as a proof of the state of feeling which prevailed at the time in which he

lived ; a time when Christians, even the best of them, had inherited the worst prejudices against the Jews. Their misdemeanours, their exactions, their usurious practices, their oppressions, all were remembered against them, while no voice was raised in extenuation or excuse. All agreed in despising and execrating this vindictive and extortionate race. Antonio has seen Shylock exercising his craft and turning it to the vilest uses. Perhaps he thinks, in the spirit of his age, that forcing him to be a Christian may work some miraculous change in him. We must at least believe that he did not put this indignity upon him in mere wantonness of spirit.

After declining the Duke's courtesies, on the plea of the necessity for her immediate return to Padua, Portia, in her haste to be home a day before her husband, is not inclined to linger on the road, even to receive, as the young doctor, the thanks of Antonio and her husband ; but seeing the ring on the latter's finger, the thought passes across her mind of testing how deeply he really values it. After the long strain upon her brain, the sense of relief which follows the deliverance of Antonio must have vent in some new channel. The "marriage bells" which for the first time ring in her heart—must not yet be heard by others. She must keep up and carry out her self-imposed character to the end. So, as she cannot take gold, she asks Antonio for his gloves, which she will wear for his sake—gloves were dainties in those days,—and Bassanio for his ring. The latter request being refused, the doctor affects to be slightly indignant, refuses to accept aught else, and takes a hasty leave. The ring is sent after him, as we know, at Antonio's intercession, and the

clerk despatched for the Jew's signature to the deed, which is to "be well welcome" to Lorenzo—and the journey to Belmont is begun.

Here messengers must have been met by Portia on the way back (but not, as on her journey to Venice, messengers bearing ill news), with letters which make her aware of the good fortune of Antonio, in that "three of his argosies have richly come to harbour suddenly." Portia has presumed a little too much on having the start of Bassanio by many hours, and, as we learn from Stephano, she has strayed about by holy crosses on her way home,

"Where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours."

Thus it is that, notwithstanding all the means at her disposal, and the help which she could command from her trusty servant Balthazar, Portia arrives so immediately before her husband, who was not likely to pause by the way, that she has barely time to warn her household to take no notice of her having been absent, when a trumpet proclaims the tidings of the near approach of Bassanio and his suite. At once she welcomes him "*home*," and bids Antonio welcome to "*our house* ;" and thus graciously makes him feel that it is only as the mistress of his friend's house that she bids him welcome.

What a scene is before them ! Nature welcomes them in the tranquil moonlight, so congenial to their own thoughts and wearied senses ; and even the weight of their excess of happiness is lifted from them by the pleasant little embarrassment caused by the parting with the rings, which Portia has happily devised to bring about the discovery that she was the doctor and Nerissa the clerk.

Think, too, of the exquisite contrast between the opening of the

play and its close. It begins in the blaze of garish day, in the bustling streets of Venice. Yet are the first words of the great Venetian merchant tinged with sadness—"In truth, I know not why I am so sad"—a sadness prophetic of the coming storm in which he was so soon to be involved by his devotion to his friend. It closes far away from the great city, in a garden faintly lighted by the moon, as she pales before the coming morning, no trace of sadness left in the merchant's heart,—for have not his devotion, his very danger, led to the happiest issues?

And now the newly-made husband, who left Belmont in the deepest dejection and anxiety for his best friend, returns to it with that friend, all trouble over, and is welcomed to it by its mistress as its lord. This friend's safety he owes also to the noble lady, who before had given him so generously her house, her servants, and herself. The deeds of his after-life must speak for him, for she had indeed "bereft him of all words." And so the curtain falls, Portia having strewn blessings upon all around her.

But I could never leave my characters when the curtain fell and the audience departed. As I had lived with them through their early lives, so I also lived into their future. I saw Bassanio and Antonio despatched by Portia the next day to Padua to talk over with Belario the critical scene so lately gone through, and bearing with them her injunctions and fond messages to bring the sick man back, if possible, to be nursed into health at Belmont.

For Portia I have always dreamed out a holier and far more difficult task. I do not believe that such a woman as I conceive her to have

been would leave the despised deserted Jew to his fate. When she finds that even Antonio's "mercy" is not of the kind to satisfy her woman's heart, she vows to herself that, out of her own great happiness, and in abounding gratitude for it, she will devote herself to the all but impossible task of converting this "inexorable Jew." She goes alone to his wretched, lonely home, to which he has been accompanied only by the execrations of the mob. These still ring in his sick ears as he lies there stunned, bewildered, bruised, defeated, deserted. But sharper, more harrowing than all, are his self-upbraidings that he should have left a loophole in the bond by which the hated Christian merchant has escaped. In his rage, in his bitter self-accusations, he lashes himself into a state of frenzy. If left alone much longer to these wild mad moods, he may destroy himself. But before he has time for this, comes to his door, and will not be denied, this noble lady. He knows her not, roughly enough forbids her entrance; but with gentle force, and with the charm of her winning manners and noble and gracious presence, she contrives to gain an entrance. It is little she can do in her first visits. Still she repeats them, bringing wine and oil and nourishment for the sick body, and sacred ointment for the bruised mind. The reviled, despised Jew finds himself for the first time (for oh so long!) tended, thought for, cared for. Why should this be? Never has this been since his early days; since his beloved Leah left him, perhaps in his early manhood, when the grief at her loss hardened him. Her gentle presence by his side through life might have softened down his worst passions, which only rebelled

at the blow sustained in her loss. His young daughter may have resembled her mother somewhat in feature, but not at all in character; he has therefore cared not for her—put no faith, no trust in her. The Jew would find in Portia a likeness to his beautiful Leah; would fancy the tender, sympathetic eyes, looking so gently on him, were hers; would hear her voice when “in accents very low,” and with “a most silver flow”

“Of subtle-paced counsel in distress,
Right to the heart and brain, though undescried,
Winning its way with extreme gentleness,
Through all the outworks of suspicious pride,”

she sought first to draw a slow permission for her visits. Then on the Jew's side would come a looking forward to their recurrence; then a hoping, wishing for them, until gradually she had drawn from him from time to time the story of his life, of his woes, of his own wrongs, of the wrongs of his race, of his sweet lost wife; of his ungrateful daughter, who in her flight took not only his ducats, his jewels, but the ring given him by Leah, “when he was a bachelor.” We can imagine what a sympathising ear was lent to all his tale; how she gave him “a world of sighs”—this man, who had through life chiefly met with curses and execrations. We can imagine, too, how, little by little, she reminded him of words which *somewhere, at some time*—but little heeded then—he had heard tell of that “quality of mercy,” “which droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath,”—that place being his poor withered heart. He would *see now* “the deeds of mercy.” He would not recognise the hand which, as the

“reverend doctor,” had dealt out such uncompromising “justice.” But he would begin to feel that, had he gained his cruel will, and his “deeds been on his head,”—had he been let to *use* that hungry knife, there would have been “the smell o’ the blood” under his nostrils day and night; and that same blood would have been upon his soul for ever. Not even the God of his fathers could have washed it away!

These are his *own* reflections; not forced upon him by Portia. He will recognise her own life of self-denial. He will know that, with every luxury, every happiness around her, she leaves them all continually to sit with, and comfort, and console his sick body and broken spirit. How can he show his gratitude? He will do as she wishes; will see the daughter on whom he has poured his curse; will put his blessing in the place of it; will even look upon her Christian husband.

But I have imagined both daughter and husband much altered, purified. Lorenzo, on reflection, has been ashamed, not perhaps of stealing the Jew's daughter, but of accepting the stolen ducats and jewels which she brought with her, and would be longing, if he dared, to make restitution and confess his meanness. Jessica, under the roof of Portia, and within the sphere of her noble influence, could not fail to grow better and purer. She early shows herself capable of appreciating Portia's character when Lorenzo asks her, “How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?”

“Past all expressing: It is very meet,
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life;
In having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth.”

As her character improves, becom-

ing chastened and ennobled, she will reflect upon the graceless step she took in leaving her old lonely father, whatever might have been his faults, and in robbing him, too. How can she look for happiness in her wedded life, she who has commenced it so unworthily? Oh that she could make reparation! She must know the sentence passed upon her father in the Court at Venice. How, then, can she be happy? And so some day, permission being obtained by Portia, she may be seen at the feet of the old man sobbing out there her grief and her contrition; and he will remember that he made her "home a hell," and look gently upon her. Will this be for him the first taste of the blessedness of mercy? "It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

I think that the Jew will not live long. His body and mind have been too bruised, battered, stunned. But Portia's spell will be upon him to the end. His last looks will be upon the eyes which have opened his, and shown him the "light to lighten his darkness;" and he who was despised, reviled, and himself at war with all men, will now have felt the happiness of bestowing for-

To Miss GERALDINE E. JEWSEBURY.

[One or two of my friends, who have seen this letter when printed for private circulation, and on whose opinion I place a high value, have objected to my "dream" about Portia's conduct towards Shylock, after the curtain drops, as being conceived too much in the feeling of the present century. I have therefore reconsidered the matter, but cannot give up my first impression.

Shakespeare, in the self-defence which he puts into the Jew's mouth,

givenness, and the blessed hope of being himself forgiven.

And so I have thought out Portia. She will have, like other mortals, sorrows, sufferings, troubles. But she will bear them humbly, patiently, bravely. The hand and heart will ever remain open to help and comfort others. She will retain her gay bright spirit. She will have always her gracious attractive manners, and will spread around her in her home an atmosphere which will make Belmont an earthly paradise to those fortunate ones who are welcomed to it. But only her husband will know *all* her winning goodness; for him will be kept the inner life, the insight into her heart of hearts; to him alone she will be the friend of friends, "the perfect wife."

Much of what I have written you will perhaps think fanciful. But this is how Portia has pictured herself to my thoughts. Dear friend, does it at all explain to you the secret of what you so kindly call my "wonderful silent acting in the casket scene"?—Ever affectionately yours,

HELENA F. MARTIN.

says all he can for him. In his day, with the strong antagonism felt toward the Jews by his audiences, he would not have dared to say more, whatever he felt, in their favour; and I always maintain that Shakespeare wrote his plays most distinctly for audiences, and not for closet readers merely, although he shows the marvel of his genius in being so fitted for both, that each claim him as their own. But I believe that, as he foresaw the woman who was to simulate the doctor, and put into

Portia's heart that most excellent gift of charity, and into her mouth that divine speech of mercy, so he would not blame me if I thought her one of the exceptional beings who have lived in all ages, who have gone out of and beyond the bounded present, and acted the part, which, in our own age, though always exciting admiration, would in no way create surprise.

With the essence of Christianity within her, the Jew, who had by the change of his creed become an outcast even from his tribe, was the nearest to her pity. His merciless nature when outraged could only be appeased by, as it were, dipping his revenge, when opportunity came, in the blood, and watching the slow, torturing death-throes of his foe. Where, then, could such a creature find a resting-place, when thwarted in the line of action which even the law of his land, he had been assured, could not impugn? Never could despair be deeper than his, and never was help more needed. And who so fit to give help as the one who had

unconsciously brought all this misery on his head?

Shylock's money, as Portia knew, had been borrowed to bring the lover of her choice to woo and win her. His daughter had been induced to leave her home, and take with her his precious gold and jewels, by the friend, and with the knowledge, of her husband, and by that husband's wish had been made welcome to her home. Portia knows all this if the Jew does not; and, knowing this, would not her heart be the first to think of and turn in pity towards the miserable and forsaken outcast? To her he was as no common Jew. His means as usurer had helped to perfect her life. Could her happiness be unalloyed while another suffered shame and misery, no matter whether deserved or not, because of her? I still "dream" that it could not, and believe that, quietly and privately, as her high station permitted, she might have done what no other dared, or indeed cared to do.

H. F. M.

TROLLOPE'S LIFE OF CICERO.*

WE have been told somewhat persistently of late that the literature of Greece and Rome is becoming obsolete as the foundation of a liberal education. Modern languages, modern history, modern science, are to take its place. There is come to be a "modern side" to many of our great public schools; French is suggested as the alternative for Latin; Greek is to become optional at our universities. The growing common-sense of this nineteenth century revolts, it is said, against the fetters of the old "classical" training. The public calls for something more practical, and less pedantic; it does not want to hear so much of these ancient languages and ancient times; they will not help us in the way of business, or of social science, or of sanitary reforms.

Yet we fail to discover any strong symptoms of this change in the public taste. Translations from the Greek and Roman classics abound more than ever. Homer, Horace, Theocritus, the Greek dramatists, are continually making their reappearance in a new English dress. "English Readers" are offered familiar introductions to these ancient authors. "Stories" adapted from their pages seem [to have as much attraction for the young people of the present day as those charming 'Tales from Shakespeare' which Charles Lamb and his sister wrote for the delight of a generation now grown old. The Westminster Latin Play grows in popularity. The "Agamemnon" of Æschylus has been lately performed in the original Greek to a

crowded and admiring audience at St George's Hall. So far are we as yet from casting off our old educational armour, that we are furnishing and refitting it with a loving carefulness.

More especially do the latter days of republican Rome, and the last flashes of her glory, seem to possess a growing attraction for the modern inquirer. Busy and eager as we are in our own politics—perhaps for that very reason—we find a curious interest in examining the complications of party and individual policy which distracted Rome during the last forty years before the Christian era. Election petitions and Bribery Commissions of our own day have a less abiding interest for us than the claims of the rival candidates, the speeches of the rival orators, the feuds and the faction-fights of the Roman forum nineteen hundred years ago. It is natural enough that such interest should exist for a few. To the mind of the student the past is always more attractive than the present. To the antiquarian the smallest detail of personal history or of daily household life, so long as it is recorded in black letter or in difficult manuscript and quaint spelling, seems more important than all the chronicles of the day. And that professed scholars should busy themselves, and hope to engage the attention of others, in dissecting the character and motives of Cæsar, and Cicero, and Cato, would be no more remarkable than the airing of hobbies of other kinds. But to find one of our most popular and successful novelists, whose taste and

* The Life of Cicero. By Anthony Trollope. 2 vo's. London: Chapman & Hall (Limited).

genius one would have said were intensely modern,—who has painted modern society and modern manners more truthfully than perhaps any writer one could name,—throwing himself on a sudden, heart and soul into the arena of Roman politics in the days of the *Triumvirates*, is something to startle this very modern generation.

But so it is. Mr Anthony Trollope has left the happy hunting-grounds of *Barsetshire* for the—

“*Fumum et opes strepitumque Romæ.*”

We make no apology for the Latin quotation, for evidently the reading public—of whose tastes no man should be a better judge than Mr Trollope—knows its *Horace* better than we have been accustomed to suppose. Instead of showing us “*The way we live now*,” he has undertaken to show us how they lived in the days of *Cicero*; and there is little doubt (for, as we have said, he knows his public pretty well) but that he will find willing and appreciative readers. He does not write as a scholar—indeed he modestly repudiates any such claim; but for that very reason his volumes appeal to a wider circle. Not that this is an unscholarly book by any means; but we are spared a good many nice discussions and criticisms which interest the classical student more exclusively, and we have here perhaps the first *Life of Cicero* which will take its place on the drawing-room table.

It may be said at once that Mr Trollope writes with a purpose—a very distinct purpose. His biography of *Cicero* “has sprung from love of the man.” As *Juvenal* tells us that indignation stirs the satirist into poetry, so here indignation of another kind has given us a biographer. It has long seemed to Mr Trollope that no

modern writer has done *Cicero* justice.

“I must acknowledge that in discussing his character with men of letters, as I have been prone to do, I have found none quite to agree with me. His intellect they have admitted, and his industry; but his patriotism they have doubted, his sincerity they have disputed, and his courage they have denied. It might have become me to have been silenced by their verdict, but I have rather been instigated to appeal to the public, and to ask them to agree with me against my friends. It is not only that *Cicero* has touched all matters of interest to men, and has given a new grace to all that he has touched; that as an orator, rhetorician, an essayist, and a correspondent he was supreme, that as a statesman he was honest, as an advocate fearless, and as a governor pure; that he was a man whose intellectual part always dominated that of the body; that in taste he was excellent, in thought both correct and enterprising, and that in language he was perfect. All this has been already so said of him by other biographers. *Plutarch*, who is as familiar to us as though he had been English—and *Middleton*, who thoroughly loved his subject—and latterly Mr *Forsyth*, who has struggled to be honest to him,—might have sufficed as telling us so much as that. But there was a humanity in *Cicero*, a something almost of Christianity, a stepping forward out of the dead intellectualities of Roman life into moral perceptions, into natural affections, into domesticity, philanthropy, and conscious discharge of duty, which do not seem to have been as yet fully appreciated. To have loved his neighbour as himself before the teaching of Christ, was much for a man to achieve; and that he did this, is what I claim for *Cicero*, and hope to bring home to the minds of those who can find time for reading yet another added to the constantly increasing volumes about Roman times.”

We have then, in these volumes, confessedly the work of a champion and an apologist. Not that they present any partial or garbled statement of facts, or that they ignore the many inconsistencies

and weaknesses of Cicero's character; but their author thinks that Cicero has suffered unfairly at the hands of his critics, from the very fact that we know so much of him from his letters: they have been read against him,—so unfairly, Mr Trollope thinks, that he “almost wishes they had not been preserved.” He does not make out Cicero to be a hero, as we have said; but his love and admiration of the man amount to enthusiasm, and it is by no means necessary for a man to be a hero in order to call forth these feelings in those who read or write about him any more than in those with whom he lives. We do not always agree with the present writer in his estimate: but so long as facts are not distorted or omitted, an honest partiality is no disqualification in a biographer,—perhaps rather the contrary; and it certainly makes the narrative more piquant by the infusion of the personality of the writer.

We know more of Cicero than of any Roman who ever lived. A magnificent orator, engaged as “counsel” in the chief political trials of his day; the most powerful speaker in the senate at a time when the fate of Rome hung on the strife of parties, who carefully prepared all his speeches and pleadings (whether actually delivered or not), and committed them to writing afterwards; an indefatigable and brilliant letter-writer, who during twenty-five of the busiest years of his life kept up a large correspondence, in which most of the public events of the day are touched upon by one who played an important part in them all, and the characters of the public men who were his contemporaries are freely discussed, while at the same time his personal tastes and habits are disclosed in all the familiar confidence of private friendship,—his whole political and personal life lies open to us, since a large

proportion of these speeches and letters have been preserved. He figures, too, in so many different characters at once,—the leader of the Roman bar, first minister of State in tempestuous times, the governor of an important foreign dependency, the political and literary correspondent—and great in all these. We are probably not in possession of a quarter of all that he wrote; but from what we have, we can collect an autobiography of the man almost as complete as if he had advisedly written it, together with a political history of his times. Yet it is no paradox to say that it is because we know so much, that we feel how little we know. Ignorance is always sharp and decisive in its verdicts; wider knowledge leads to a balancing of evidence and a judicial hesitation. The old school histories of England, with which many of us in our younger days had to be content, were wont to sum up the characters of our English sovereigns with a brevity and distinctness very satisfactory to the learner: it was “bloody” Queen Mary, and “glorious” Queen Bess, and “good old” George the Third. But in these days of historical research we have had to unlearn a good many of these rough-and-ready estimates, and are taught to believe that white is not nearly so white, or black so black, as it has been painted. So it is with ancient history. The characters of Aristides, and Themistocles, and Alexander, are stereotyped; Camillus and Fabius enjoy an undisturbed reputation, because, in point of fact, we know so little about them. But when we get into the latter days of the Roman commonwealth, our materials—thanks chiefly to Cicero—are so comparatively abundant, that the public men of that period are shown us in almost as strong a light as those of the past or present gen-

eration; we see something of the different sides of their character, of the views entertained of them by their contemporaries, friends or enemies—we have to make allowance for exaggerations, and try to reconcile contradictions, till we find ourselves either warming into partisanship or inclined to give no verdict at all. The closer view we get of any man's public or private life, the greater will be our interest in his actions and character; and the greater the interest, the more surely will opinions differ. Over Cæsar and Cicero we dispute as though they were party leaders of to-day. We incline to think that it is not so much because the complicated intrigues and the internecine civil warfare which distracted the expiring republic have any absorbing interest for modern readers, as because they are the only period of her history which we can study in the public speeches and the private correspondence of the day; because we can learn how her great men in those days actually spoke and wrote, and how they judged of each other's motives and conduct. They are thus brought far nearer to us, in spite of the difference of date, than many periods of our own national history. We know almost as much of Cæsar as we do of Cromwell, and far more of Cicero than of Bacon.

But the life and character and correspondence of Cicero have a special attraction for many who may not care very much for the civil wars of Rome. He was, as Mr Trollope says, so little like a Roman. Without going quite so far as to endorse the opinion that he was so like a Christian, "that in essentials we can hardly see the difference"—although here Mr Trollope might claim the authority both of Petrarch and of Erasmus—he had certainly very little in him of the old spirit of paganism. In many points he

strongly resembled the modern intellectual Englishman who throws himself into public life.

"What a man he would have been for London life! How he would have enjoyed his club, picking up the news of the day from all lips, while he seemed to give it to all ears! How popular he would have been at the Carlton, and how men would have listened to him while every great or little crisis was discussed! How supreme he would have sat on the Treasury bench,—or how unanswerable, how fatal, how joyous when attacking the Government from the opposite seats! How crowded would have been his rack with invitations to dinner! . . . How the pages of the magazines would have run over with little essays from his pen! 'Have you seen our Cicero's paper on agriculture? That lucky fellow, Editor —, got him to do it last month!' 'Of course you have read Cicero's article on the soul? The bishops don't know which way to turn.' 'So the political article in the "Quarterly" is Cicero's.' 'Of course, you know the art-criticism in the "Times" this year is Tully's doing!' But that would probably be a bounce. And then what letters he would write! With the penny post instead of travelling messengers at his command, and pen instead of wax and sticks, or perhaps with an instrument-writer and a private secretary, he would have answered all questions and solved all difficulties. He would have so abounded with intellectual fertility, that men would not have known whether most to admire his powers of expression or to deprecate his want of reticence."

We recognise the great modern statesman whose versatile powers and "want of reticence" are probably in the writer's mind (though he certainly would not be found at the Carlton); but we hardly think Cicero would have condescended to post-cards.

The three men who occupy the foreground of Roman history, after the bloody wars of Marius and Sulla, were strictly contemporaries. Julius Cæsar was born exactly a hundred years before the Christian era, Cnæus Pompey and Marcus

Tullius Cicero six years earlier. Mark Antony (we confess to a prejudice, like Mr Trollope, in favour of the familiar English forms), who strove for a short time to wield Cæsar's power, was seventeen years his junior, and naturally came later to the front. Round these four names the history of Rome gathers itself for nearly fifty years: from the fall of Sulla till the accession to absolute power of Augustus. With Pompey first, and with Julius Cæsar afterwards, Cicero tried to make common cause, in the interest of what he thought was republican liberty, though it was really only the rule of an oligarchy. Both welcomed his support so long as it was likely to serve their private ambition; for Cicero represented the intellect and the respectability of Rome: and both could and did appreciate him highly when he did not threaten to cross their interests. In the case of Cæsar, the literary tastes which they had in common formed a strong bond of union: and, as we find, they could meet and discuss literary questions at Cicero's dinner-table, even in the days when Cæsar was making evident steps towards what Cicero abhorred as an unconstitutional power, and when, consequently, any conversation on politics would have been embarrassing. In spite of some difference in age, they had been intimate, as Cicero tells us, when young men about Rome, and had studied oratory together at Rhodes under Molo. For Pompey Cicero certainly entertained at one time a personal regard; for we have no reason to think him wholly insincere in his profession of it, and Pompey, though reputed cold and arrogant, seems to have had certain powers of fascination when he chose to put them forth. With Antony Cicero could have had little in com-

mon; and there was at no time any friendship between the two—though Antony, too, after Cæsar's fall, would have bid high for Cicero's support, and Cicero turned to him for a moment, though almost hopelessly, after the collapse of the republican fortunes at Philippi. On these men Cicero's hopes and fears for Rome and for himself, his patriotic aspirations and his political ambitions, his very life and fortunes, hung during the most important period of his public career: they were the masters of his fate as well as that of Rome, and at the hands of the weakest and the worst of them he met his death.

Though Cicero himself is not the leading actor in these last scenes of the republic, he necessarily figures in all that are presented to us in full: because it is on him that we have chiefly to depend for the history of the times, and he could only write fully of events in which he had a share. We have to see with his eyes, and to hear evidence through his interpretation; and it is difficult to avoid judging men as he judged them. But that would not always be safe. It is impossible for the most honest writer, in describing the political struggles in which he has taken a strong personal interest and a leading part, not to give to his narrative of facts, and his judgment of motives and actions, the colour of his own political creed. The greater his abilities, the more earnest his convictions, the more misleading he is apt to become as a historical guide, if we resign ourselves to him implicitly. If we want to form a dispassionate judgment on any of our own great national struggles, we make a point of reading at least some of the contemporary memoirs on both sides. But, for the times of which we are now speaking, we

have no opportunity of making this comparison. Except for the mere skeleton of the history, it is Cicero alone upon whom we have to depend alike for facts and opinions. Pompey and Cæsar would have very little personality for us, except as successful soldiers, who made that success a path to political power, but for Cicero's letters. And it is as well, perhaps, that he wrote of these men according to his different moods, sanguine or despondent, trustful or suspicious, —now gratified by some mark of attention, now mortified at some neglect,—now thinking he saw in one or other the saviour of Roman liberties, and now the would-be despot,—since this gives us a chance of seeing them on more than one side of their character, and as they appeared to other men's observation from day to day. Had only some one or two of these letters been preserved, we might have mistaken for Cicero's deliberate judgment of Pompey or Cæsar what we now see to be only the confidential expression of the strong feeling of the hour. At one moment we find him "quite inflamed with love" for Cæsar, or hoping "to be found worthy to be the Lælius" to Pompey's 'Scipio,'—at another moment foreseeing in the latter a possible Sylla, and denouncing the former as the worst enemy of his country.

We cannot help thinking that Cicero was a man whom circumstances—chief among which must be reckoned his transcendent abilities as an orator—had forced into a position to which he was unequal. The only career at Rome was what we should call politics, or, more correctly speaking, the service of the State, for it included military command, and the possibility of military glory. Rome still retained so much of the spirit of the old

regal constitution that her chief magistrates were leaders in the field as well as in the council. The Bar, so far as it could be considered as a profession at all—for the advocates professed to take no fees—was only a preparation for the senate-house and the popular assemblies; and a Roman of good family, and of even moderate ambition and abilities, looked forward to rising step by step to the successive offices of State,—to becoming in his time quæstor, ædile, prætor, and, it might be, consul. Had it been possible in the commonwealth of Rome for a man of brilliant powers and great capacity for work to win his way to fame and public honours at the bar, or as an author, or in both these lines, as he might now in England, Cicero's greatness would have been undisputed, and the questions now so warmly discussed as to his conduct and character would never have arisen. The faults laid to his charge affect exclusively his public life, and his behaviour under the pressure of unusual trials and the most embarrassing complications. The times were wholly "out of joint;" he was not born to set them right; yet he thought he was. This is in brief the inner story of Cicero's life,—of his grand aspirations, his frequent weaknesses, the failure which must have been far sadder to him than death.

Sprung from a modest family, none of whom had risen to public honours, his father a plain country gentleman, as we might describe him, he seems nevertheless to have received the best education that Rome and foreign travel could give him. He had studied rhetoric, as was the custom with all who aspired to a liberal education: to speak well was an essential accomplishment for the Roman gentleman who had any ambition to enter public life.

In order to win the "most sweet voices" of the Roman commons, which were to open to the candidate the path to fame and wealth, he must at least know how to use his own. And great as we may conceive Cicero's natural gifts to have been, we know that they were not brought to perfection without severe and careful training.

It was in his twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth year that he made his first appearance as an advocate in private causes; a volunteer and gratuitous advocate, it must be understood, for no fees were attached to a Roman brief, and a Roman gentleman would have held it "servile" to do any such work for pay. Usury, strange to say, was the only direct mode of making money which was considered gentleman-like at Rome. There was indeed a law in existence which prohibited any one from even receiving a present for his services as a pleader; but it seems soon to have fallen into practical abeyance, and the very fact of its confirmation or re-enactment under Augustus shows that it had been at least very loosely observed. As was the case with our own Bribery Acts in the good old election days, the law made a thing illegal, but failed to enlist public opinion on its side so far as to make it disgraceful. That these professional orators did take fees or presents, under whatever euphonious name the giver and the recipient might be pleased to describe them, admits of no doubt. Cicero claims for himself a superiority to such temptations which he feels to be exceptional, and Mr Trollope is very indignant that any one should refuse to admit this disclaimer to the fullest extent. The discredit which has been thrown upon it rests upon the known practice of other advocates, the undoubted fact of Cicero's being in the receipt of a large in-

come whose sources are not ascertained, and a doubtful passage in one of his own letters as to a present of books from one who had almost certainly (from his jesting allusion to the Cincian law) been a client. If it had not been for his own strong assertion in the matter, there would have been very little to the discredit of his general honesty if he had received such voluntary acknowledgments of his services from grateful clients who could afford it, whether corporate or individual, in spite of this Cincian law. The practice itself was not held discreditable, whatever the law might say. Mr Trollope himself admits that such a law was in its very nature absurd. Portia thinks it no insult when Bassanio offers her the three thousand ducats for her services—"as a tribute, not as a fee"—though the "young doctor of Rome," it must be borne in mind, had acted as assessor of the court, not as an advocate: and we are not inclined to think the worse of Hortensius for accepting the ivory sphinx from his client Verres, though it might be convenient to Cicero to make it a charge against his rival.

Cicero had already won for himself considerable reputation as an orator in these private causes, when he undertook the management of the great public case which raised him at once to the foremost place at the Roman bar—the impeachment of Verres. The defendant had been for three years Prætor (we might call it lieutenant-governor) of Sicily, one of the most important provinces of Rome. There can be no question but that Verres was a bad man, and a cruel and rapacious governor. Whether he was nearly so bad as Cicero or Mr Trollope would make him out to have been, is another question. Most of what we know about him is from Cicero's

pleadings; and even of these we have to remember that the greater part were never actually delivered at the trial, but prepared at leisure, and polished with infinite care, and issued to the world as specimens of the writer's rhetorical powers. They are splendid essays in declamation, perfect alike in their lucid arrangement and their sonorous eloquence: they are amongst the masterpieces of Roman literature; but they are not evidence. We have no more right to draw our character of Verres from these orations of Cicero, than to form our estimate of the Duke of Grafton from the letters of Junius. The invective in both cases is magnificent: and we are quite sure there must have been some foundation for it in both cases, or it would not have told with the public of the day. But as in the modern case we know, so in the ancient case we have fair ground for suspecting, that the passion is in large degree artificial, and that accuracy of fact is hardly so much in the writer's mind as force of language. Quintilian, who fully appreciated Cicero's powers, was the first to make the obvious remark, which some modern biographers would yet seem to ignore, that it would be well if in Verres's case we could hear both sides of the question. He was an oppressive governor, no doubt; and so, as Mr Trollope says with too much truth and a very righteous indignation, were nearly all the Roman provincial governors of the day. The plunder of these unhappy provincials was a recognised source of official income to the Roman nobles who were so fortunate as to get foreign appointments. A governor who did not plunder more or less was a monster of virtue whom they had a difficulty in comprehending. It may be granted that the reign of Verres in Sicily had tried the pa-

tience of the provincials beyond endurance, or they would not have complained. But there were wider interests at stake in this particular trial than those either of Verres or his accusers. Upon the issue of that trial depended in great measure the maintenance of a privilege to which the Roman senate attached high importance, and possibly, as Cicero thought, the retention in the hands of the aristocracy of these very lucrative appointments. The right of sitting as judges (or rather as jurymen, for they combined both offices) was a great object of ambition to Roman citizens—much as the magistracy is among ourselves. The members of the senate at this time possessed it exclusively; the "knights," the class below, who had once enjoyed it, were jealous of it; and there were loud clamours generally for some popular change. The present panel of judges—or jurymen—was more than suspected of being willing to share the plunder of a province if judiciously employed in bribes by an accused official, and many of them were looking forward to future opportunities of such plunder for themselves. Verres was supported by powerful friends—the great family of the Metelli among the number—and the judges would have been glad enough to have let him escape. But Cicero warned them, as he had already warned them more generally in his defence of Roscius of Ameria, that they themselves and their order were now on their trial. That if they now showed themselves honest enough to convict this exemplary criminal, they might hope to retain for the senate its present authority in the law-courts, of which they were so jealous; that if they now disappointed the hopes of all who looked to them for justice, the days of their privileges were numbered. It is probable

that Cicero saw in this trial a great opportunity for placing himself well both with the aristocratic and with the popular party. Not that he was actuated by any unworthy motives; but he kept his own advancement to the highest offices of State steadily in view, and he wanted the good word and the good will of all men. He was at once proclaiming himself the real friend of the aristocrats, with whom his true sympathies always lay, for he was pleading with them for their own honour and the maintenance of their dignity: and he was at the same time the avowed champion of the oppressed provincials, and the bold assailant of iniquity in high places. These political considerations would lead him to throw the whole of his energies into the prosecution of Verres. We cannot help feeling that it is the political candidate for future place and honours, and not merely the public prosecutor, who launches his scathing eloquence against the wretched defendant; he is anxious not only to secure the verdict of the Court against the criminal, but that of his fellow-citizens generally in his own favour. He ventured something, no doubt: he must have made enemies, by his plain-speaking, among the most corrupt and venal of the nobles; but we can hardly agree with Mr Trollope in thinking that he took up this case "apparently with no other prospect than that of making himself odious to the party to which he belonged." The energy and ability with which he conducted this famous prosecution crowned him with deserved honour, and if he had coloured his facts strongly to increase the effect of his eloquence, it is no more than orators, legal and forensic, have done in all ages without reproach. But that he had any intention of seriously risking his own prospects

in the abstract interests of justice we cannot believe. Even Mr Trollope, whose honesty and fairness of statement is unimpeachable even where the facts make against his own strong predilections, shows us in his pages that where Cicero was retained for the defence of public officers arraigned on the same charges as Verres, he could treat in a very different spirit the complaints of mere provincials against a Roman governor. We find him defending Valerius Flaccus, who had been governor in Asia, and of whose oppressions and exactions in that office there is no doubt whatever,—though he was more fortunate than Verres in having secured the great orator on his side. These are some of Mr Trollope's remarks on the speech:—

"He is very hard upon the Greeks of Asia, the class from which the witnesses against Flaccus were taken. We know here in England that a spaniel, a wife, and a walnut-tree may be beaten with advantage. Cicero says that in Asia there is a proverb that a Phrygian may be improved in the same way. '*Fiat experimentum in corpore vili*:' it is declared throughout Asia that you shall take a Carian for your experiment. The 'last of the Mysians' is the well-known Asiatic term for the lowest type of humanity. Look through all the comedies—you will find that the leading slave is a Lydian. Then he turns to those poor Asiatics, and asks them whether any one can be expected to think well of them, when such is their own testimony of themselves?"

He defended Fonteius against similar charges brought against him as Proprætor in Gaul. Probably Fonteius did not plunder on so grand a scale as Verres,—and Gaul was a poorer province than Sicily. But let us hear, at the mouth of so favourable an interpreter as Mr Trollope, what the spirit and tone of the defence was.

"The speech for Fonteius is remarkable as being as hard against the provincial Gauls, as his speech against Verres had been favourable to the Sicilians. . . . Nothing that these wretched Gauls could say against a Roman citizen ought to be accepted in evidence! All the Romans, he says, who have been in the province wish well to Fonteius. "Would you rather believe these Gauls? led by what feeling? By the opinion of men? Is the opinion, then, of your enemies, of greater weight than that of your fellow-citizens? Or is it the greater credibility of the witnesses? Would you prefer, then, unknown men to known, dishonest men to honest, foreigners to your own countrymen, greedy men to those who come before you for nothing, men of no religion to those who fear the gods, those who hate the empire and the name of Rome to allies and citizens who are good and faithful?"

"But the Gauls," says Mr Trollope, "were barbarians, whereas the Sicilians were Greeks." (An æsthetic difference, we admit; but which should surely have made no distinction between them in the eyes of the champion of justice and humanity—"determined to take the part of the weak against the strong, with no reward before him"—as we are told Cicero was in the matter of Verres.) "And it should always be remembered," he goes on to say, "that Cicero spoke as an advocate, and that the praise and censure of an advocate require to be taken with many grains of salt." Undoubtedly: and this is just what we ought to remember in reading those terrible pleadings against Verres. We have not the smallest desire to rehabilitate the Sicilian governor. We are not disposed to excuse the robberies of pictures and statues charged against him, as a modern French writer, M. Bonaffé, seems half inclined to do, on the ground of his having been an enthusiastic connoisseur and collector; though we cannot help

being reminded of the very elastic consciences of collectors some fifty years ago, who thought nothing of filching an ancient charter from a public library where its value was not appreciated, or pocketing a rare coin or a choice Elzevir, when the still rarer opportunity offered. Verres at all events paid the penalty for such dangerous tastes, if the story be true that Antony got his name inserted in the list of the proscribed as the only means of compelling him to disgorge his splendid collection of bronzes. The Sicilians were well avenged, and few will waste any sympathy upon Verres's fate: but Cicero himself would probably be much surprised to find his magnificent rhetoric treated as history.

Verres at least felt himself too guilty to abide the result of the trial. Before the conclusion of the evidence, his counsel, Hortensius, up to that time the acknowledged "leader of the bar," appears to have thrown up his brief, and the defendant himself went off into voluntary exile to Marseilles—still a rich man, we may conclude, in spite of the fine which would be levied on him. And the triumphant accuser wrote and circulated, as soon as he could, his meditated speeches in the great case, for all Rome to read and applaud.

Honours and popularity flowed in thick upon him. He was elected at the earliest age allowed by law to the successive offices of ædile and prætor; and seven years after his impeachment of Verres he was elected first of the two consuls of the year—"not by the silent ballot-votes," as he tells us with pardonable self-congratulation, "but by the living acclamations of the people." It was the most memorable year of Cicero's life, and perhaps the most memorable consulship that Rome ever saw. In that year there broke out, and was

promptly and bloodily suppressed, the attempted revolution headed by Catiline, as to whom historical criticism has not yet quite made up its mind whether he was a conspirator or a martyr. Mr Trollope is, we think, perfectly fair in his treatment of the question. He does not contend that the contemporary accounts given us by Sallust and Cicero are to be accepted as calm historical statements. He would admit, we suppose, that Sallust was rather an essayist or lecturer than a historian, and that Cicero wrote and spoke as a party leader—honest, no doubt, but hardly impartial. And he allows that the language of the poets, from Virgil and Juvenal down to Voltaire and Ben Jonson,—who “have made him a stock character, and dramatised him as a fiend,”—is not evidence. But, as he says, such language is the continued expression of the feeling that has prevailed since Catiline's time; and this kind of tradition has its value as well as written history.

It is very possible that Catiline and his party professed and entertained some views of political reform, like all revolutionists, however mixed with selfish aims and ambitions; and we are scarcely competent judges of what grounds they might have had for discontent. But we agree with Mr Trollope that it is impossible to “consent to the building up of a noble patriot out of such materials as we have concerning him.”

We can only deal in this place, and that very briefly, with the high-handed and terrible act of justice done upon the conspirators in Rome at the instance, and, as it would appear, by the sole authority, of the new consul. “Act of justice,” we have little hesitation in calling it, though its strict legality is more than questionable, and was sternly discussed in Rome almost before

the bodies of the victims were cold, as it has been since by later authorities. The whole plot, by which the consul himself was to have been stabbed in his house, the leading senators to have been slaughtered, and the city (so it was said) given up to fire and pillage, had been betrayed to Cicero: by his vehement denunciations, the very sound of which stirs us even now as we read, he had driven Catiline out of the senate, mad with rage and the consciousness of discovered guilt, to join the revolutionary forces which were already in arms in Etruria—it is difficult now to understand what legal or constitutional difficulties withheld him from being at once arrested, if he could be proved to be altogether the traitor which he is described—and it remained to deal with the chiefs of the conspiracy, who were waiting in Rome to head the insurrection there when Catiline should march his army on the city. Foremost among these was Lentulus, one of the prætors: the evidence against him and other nobles seemed conclusive; one of their agents was seized, and made confession, and damnatory letters bearing their signatures were found upon his person, and produced at the meeting of the senate. They held long and solemn deliberation, in which Cæsar, who was suspected of complicity in Catiline's plot, suggested (as reported by Sallust) that, in the first place, the senate had no power of capital punishment—that a mere vote of the house could not in such a case have the force of law (in which he would seem to have been technically right)—and that “men generally remember best what comes last, and when the punishment is severe, they will remember the severity rather than the crime,”—ominous words, which in Cicero's case were a prophecy. He therefore advised imprisonment for life. Cicero spoke strongly for

death, and assured the senate that they had in him a consul who would not shrink from carrying out their decree. Cato followed on the same side, and the sentence was passed. Down in the old State dungeon known as the *Robur Tullianum* the executioners seem to have been already in waiting. The consul himself, as the chief of the executive, led Lentulus down; his four companions were made to follow, and all disappeared into the darkness below. Nothing more certainly is known, except that shortly afterwards Cicero reappeared, and uttered a single word as to their fate in a Roman euphemism, "*Vixerunt*" — "they have lived their life." There was no trial, no evidence, no opportunity for defence, no public execution. The suddenness, the quietness, the thrilling mystery of the affair, must have made it seem doubly horrible in the eyes of all who had any sympathy with the victims, either from political convictions, or family ties, or the *esprit de corps* of their order, or the common rights of Roman citizens. It gave to what we may almost surely consider a necessary and righteous though irregular exercise of authority all the repulsive features of a quasi judicial murder done in secret. Its peculiar circumstances make it stand almost alone in history.* Mr Trollope has summed up the facts of the case, as they make against Cicero, and as his enemies might afterwards have put them, with his usual fairness:—

"As consul he had caused certain Roman citizens to be executed as conspirators in the teeth of a law which enacted that no Roman citizen should be condemned to die except by a direct vote of the people. It had cer-

tainly become a maxim of the constitution of the republic that a citizen should not be made to suffer death, except by the voice of the people. The Valerian, the Porcian, and the Sempronian laws had all been passed to that effect. Now there had been no popular vote as to the execution of Lentulus and the other conspirators who had been taken red-handed in Rome in the affair of Catiline. Their death had been decreed by the senate, and the decree of the senate had been carried out by Cicero. But no decree of the senate had the power of a law. In spite of that decree, the old law was in force; and no appeal to the people had been allowed to Lentulus. But there had grown up in the constitution a practice which had been supposed to override the Valerian and Porcian laws. In certain emergencies the senate would call upon the consuls to see that the republic should suffer no injury, and it had been held that at such moments the consuls were invested with an authority above all law. Cicero had been thus strengthened when as consul he had struggled with Catiline. But it was an open question,—as Cicero himself very well knew."

Yet we think with him that the consul was morally justified in thus overstepping the law. Whether the act was what we should call the act of a strong government or a weak one, is more open to doubt. It certainly proved, as Mr Trollope argues, the moral courage of Cicero in deliberately taking upon himself what he felt to be a perilous responsibility; but we might have equally appreciated the patriotism, and perhaps have seen more of "the high calm that marks the strong," in the statesman who had chosen to meet such a conspiracy with the ordinary powers of the law.

But, legally or illegally, Cicero had good ground for his assertion that as consul he had "saved

* The shooting of the Indian princes after the capture of Delhi, by Hodson "of Hodson's Horse," as to which act opinions were and are still divided, is perhaps the nearest modern parallel.

Rome." We will not even allow that Rome owed him less gratitude because he told her citizens of it so often. For we must hasten to follow Mr Trollope into one or two of the later scenes of Cicero's life, when the clouds so soon overshadowed the brief day of his glory. That one twelvemonth of his consulship was indeed, as his biographer pathetically says, "the apex of his fortunes; and after that, for the twenty years that followed, there fell upon him one misery after another, one trouble on the head of another trouble, so cruelly, that the reader, knowing the manner of Romans, almost wonders that he condescended to live."

Strong public feeling against the deed he had done showed itself at once. It was usual for the consul, on resigning office, to review in a speech the events of the year, and to make solemn oath that he had faithfully discharged his duties. One of the tribunes, exercising his right of veto, forbade Cicero to address the people, as having put Roman citizens to death contrary to law: he was to do nothing more than take the formal oath. But the consul was not yet to be silenced. He substituted for the usual form, he tells us, words to the effect that he had by his own sole exertions saved the republic and the city. There was a shout in response from the people that he had sworn truly. Cicero says it was unanimous; but we are told by Dion Cassius that for the words inserted in the oath "he was hated all the more." The party who supported him were at least strong enough and zealous enough to escort him in triumph home to his house, no longer consul, but still to all appearance the most popular man in Rome. "They conferred upon me not only congratulations," he writes to a friend in the exultation

of the moment, "but an eternity and immortality of glory."

But the man who depended on the gratitude or the patriotism of the Romans of that day was building on a most unstable foundation. Other actors were coming on the scene—men who had all Cicero's personal ambition with none of his scruples, and who, instead of Cicero's constant hopefulness that he should find somewhere under the changeful exterior of the Roman people a heart that beat true—and that he was the man to touch it—entertained for the mass of their fellow-citizens a secret contempt that was far better founded. Pompey was on his way to Rome at the head of his victorious army, fresh from his Asiatic conquests. On him the attention of all Rome was centred—the greater part dazzled by this flash of the old Roman military glory, some disturbed and anxious as to what would come of it. Cicero had certainly some strong suspicions, which he strove hard to quiet in his own mind, of a truth which the course of events enables us now to see pretty clearly,—that since the domination of Marius and of Sulla, the master of Rome's armies was, if he so pleased, the master of Rome. Of Pompey, Mr Trollope confesses that he "has but a vague conception." Cicero certainly never understood him, as he practically admits in his letters; and we will not here pretend to be wiser. He had at least the great merit of success. He was so popular with the commons, and so little did they mistrust him, that exceptional clauses in his favour were inserted in proposed enactments. Why he should have disbanded the devoted and irresistible army which would have seated him in Rome as dictator, king, emperor—what he would—did not appear clear to those who dreaded him then, and certainly

never will to us now. But with whatever motive, he subsequently allowed himself to form with Cæsar and Crassus that coalition of ambitious interests commonly called the First Triumvirate—as to which Mr Trollope observes with much truth that “he knows of no great fact in history so impalpable, so shadowy, so unreal.” In this association Cicero, he thinks, might have made a fourth, had he been willing to join in what was really a conspiracy against the republic. But this would have been abhorrent to his very nature and principles. The republic—as it ought to be—was the dream of his life. But his ideal republic was not democracy. What he meant was, as Mr Trollope sees, an oligarchy—call it by what name he would—

“A republic not Utopian, altogether human and rational,—a republic which he believed to be that of Scipio, of Marcellus and Lælius,—a republic which should do nothing for him but require his assistance, in which the people should vote and the oligarchs rule in accordance with the established laws. Peace and ease, prosperity and protection, it would be for the Rome of his dream to bestow upon the provinces. Law and order, education and intelligence, it would be for her rulers to bestow upon Rome.”

Such a republic as this, if “not Utopian,” was at least impossible in the Rome of Cicero. He was living, as he himself admitted in a moment of disgust, “in the dregs of the vintage of Romulus.” “Imagine, if you can,” says Mommsen, “London, with the slave population of New York, the police of Constantinople, the industrial condition of modern Rome, and think of the political state of Paris in

1848,—and you will have some idea of republican Rome in her last moments.” Mr Trollope fully endorses the same historian’s strictures on her nobles of those days.

“We remember Mommsen’s verdict: ‘On the Roman oligarchy of this period no judgment can be passed save one of inexorable and remorseless condemnation.’ The further we see into the facts of Roman history in our endeavours to read the life of Cicero, the more apparent becomes its truth. But Cicero, though he saw far towards it, never acknowledged it. In this consists the charm of his character, though at the same time the weakness of his political aspirations; his weakness,—because he was vain enough to imagine that he could talk men back from their fish-ponds; its charm,—because he was able through it all to believe in honesty. The more hopeless became the cause, the sweeter, the more impassioned, the more divine, became his language. He tuned his notes to still higher pitches of melody, and thought that thus he would bring back public virtue.”

We believe this to be no more than the simple truth. Cicero believed in the republic,—and in himself as its regenerator. For these reasons he was tempted to join any leader of the day in whom he saw power and ability combined, hoping always to mould him to his own political theories. He would have liked, as Mr Trollope says, to have been “the leading oligarch of the day”—always because he thought himself fit to govern, and that his government would be, like his consulship, the salvation of the State. That was his temptation, if he was tempted (Mr Trollope entertains no doubt that the opportunity was offered him*), to share the power of the Triumvirate. For this he

* Mr Trollope is surely right in refusing to accept in earnest (though it has commonly been so accepted) a remark in one of Cicero’s letters to Atticus, that the offer of an augurship would have tempted him to join the coalition. “That was the bait,” he says, “that would have caught me!” But it seems nothing more than a jest.

would have joined Pompey, he would have joined Cæsar, and in this hope he drifted so long between the two. He even seems at one time to have dreamed of uniting them both with himself in an ideal triumvirate, in which all the talents and all the virtues were to be represented. He saw, as he hoped, successively in Pompey, in Julius Cæsar, in the young Octavian, the saviours of Rome; and would have been content latterly, as he says in a letter to Varro, to have been, under Julius, "the mason, since he could not be the architect, of a revived republic."

The glory of his consulship passed, and only the jealousies and enmities aroused by it survived. The members of the old governing "houses" had never fully accepted this new and successful aspirant. The commons taunted him with aspiring to be "a king"—the very word threw odium on the man to whom it was applied. The election of Clodius to the tribuneship gave to his bitterest enemy the opportunity of introducing a bill—really levelled at Cicero alone—for the outlawry of any man "who had put to death a Roman citizen without trial." The hostility of the new consuls—the cold neutrality, if it was nothing more, of Cæsar and Crassus, estranged by Cicero's rejection of their overtures—the bad faith (for it seems to have amounted to this) of Pompey, on whose support he had been encouraged to depend,—drove him to despair. He retired from what he thought a hopeless contest, leaving his enemies to pass a decree of banishment in his absence, and spent sixteen months in voluntary exile, first at Dyrrhacium, and then at Thessalonica. He occupied himself during that weary time in bemoaning his fate in letters to his various friends, and urging them piteously to take steps for his re-

call. This conduct has been characterised by all previous writers as unmanly, and unworthy of his high position and character—in far too strong terms, Mr Trollope thinks. Several pages are here devoted to an apology, which at least deserves to be read for its hearty sympathy and vigorous expression, whether we fully accept it or not. The writer urges in Cicero's behalf, in the first place, that the letters written during this exile were addressed to his wife, his brother Quintus, or his friend Atticus, to whom he lays bare his inmost heart, whatever face he might have worn before the world. Then he thinks that his accusers have not fully estimated what this exile was to such a man.

"Let those who rebuke the unmanliness of Cicero's wallings remember what were his sufferings. . . . Everything was to be taken from him—all that he had; his houses, his books, his pleasant gardens, his busts and pictures, his wide retinue of slaves and possessions, lordly as are those of our dukes and earls. He was driven out from Italy, and so driven that no place of delight could be open to him. Sicily, where he had friends, Athens, where he might have lived, were closed against him. He had to look where to live, and did live, for a while, on money borrowed from his friends. All the cherished occupations of his life were over for him,—the law-courts, the forum, the senate, and the crowded meetings of Roman citizens hanging on his words."

All this is true: but banished men have suffered it in all times under all governments, and without Cicero's passionate outcries. But whatever we may think of the exile, our contempt for the noble Romans of that day is as great as Mr Trollope's. Cicero was recalled in another revulsion of popular feeling, and his journey homewards, and his reception at Rome, was one continuous triumphal progress.

For a while it seemed—and he himself was fain to think—that he was again the foremost man in Rome. But in the presence of Pompey and Cæsar his position was thoroughly changed, and the sufferings of the past and mistrust of the future had shaken his nerve and broken his spirit; he even felt inclined to blame himself for his old independence. The vacillating policy of these his latter years arose no doubt in part from the difficulties of the situation, and his unwillingness to believe in the death of Roman liberty. It would have been better, since he could not fall at Philippi, that he had retired to his books—the friends that, as he said, never failed or disappointed him, and even forgave his desertion. But the weak compliances and self-contradictions even of an honest politician are painful to read, gently as they are dealt with in the volumes before us. Such true glory as shone upon him towards the close of his career was not won at Rome. It arose out of his government of Cilicia,—not the “triumph” over the robber tribes there, which he claimed with an almost childish eagerness—but the astonished gratitude with which his provincial subjects recognised the advent of a governor who carried into practice the rules of justice and moderation which he had laid down in that noble letter on provincial government addressed to his brother Quintus. He lived to see all his hopes of that ideal republic dashed to the ground: to see the violent deaths of Pompey and Cæsar—the first with some regret, the latter with an exultation which his biographer seeks vainly to excuse. His hopes rose once again with the “boy” Octavian; “my young Cæsar,” as he calls him, whom at one time he thought he might contrive to manage, and at another that “some god had divine-

ly inspired;” and whose cold and calculating heartlessness gave him up to the swords of Antony.

We think Mr Trollope is right in refusing to apply to those who killed Cæsar the term “murderers” or “assassins.” Without going so far as to see in Cæsar, with Mr Froude, a secular Messiah, the saviour of his country from her worsed self, who met with death as his reward, we may yet feel that the cutting off of such a man at such a moment, however patriotic the impulse, was not only a deed of horror in itself, but a misfortune for Rome. But to men brought up to think that there lurked abomination under the very name and idea of “king,” and who had good reason to believe that Cæsar was aiming at kingly power, under whatever name he might choose to assume it,—among whom the slayers of tyrants were the heroes of song and legend—such a deed might naturally appear an heroic act of duty. “Judging as a Roman, when the deed was done,” says Mr Trollope, “Cicero believed it to have been a glorious deed: there could be no doubt on the subject.” And we are bound in fairness to judge him as a Roman, and not by our own standard of morality. To us Englishmen, the “gospel of the dagger” is abhorrent; but to the Romans it seemed a true gospel. Cicero was certainly present at Cæsar’s death; but there is no evidence of his having been privy to the conspiracy. Still less does it seem fair to accuse him of having been among the first to suggest such a mode of ridding the commonwealth of one who was growing too great for it. Mr Trollope has pointed out Mr Froude’s erroneous translation of a passage by which he makes Cicero say, in a letter to Atticus, that “Cæsar’s continuance in life was a disgrace

human being destroyed by a powerful beast, or some poor defenceless animal transfixd by a hunting-spear?" In that celebrated letter addressed to his brother, he impresses on him, and on all men in authority, the duty of kindness and consideration to all creatures who come under their power, even to "slaves and dumb animals"—two kinds of cattle whose feelings and sufferings an ordinary Roman governor would not take into account at all. Yet this is the same man who, in one of these orations against Verres, speaking of the execution of certain pirates, goes out of his way—for it adds nothing to his case against the defendant—to use such words as these: "There is nothing in victory so sweet, no evidence of it more sure, than to see those whom you once feared, but have now got the better of, led out to tortures and death." Such was, no doubt, too much the spirit of Roman conquerors, and possibly Cicero is here rather speaking to the passions of his supposed audience than expressing any sentiment of his own; but the use of such language is as unworthy of his better nature as his exultation in cold blood over the slaughter of a man who had once been his friend, who had sat but a few months before as an honoured guest at his table, and of whom he had spoken in the senate, within the last few weeks, in the highest terms of gratitude for his moderation in victory.

We have not been able always to adopt the view taken in these volumes of Cicero's public character. But Mr Trollope's warm and honest advocacy has made us differ from him never without regret, and

we will close our notice with a charming passage from his concluding chapter with which we cordially agree:—

"You shall live with a man from year's end to year's end, and shall not know his creed unless he tell you, or that you see him performing the acts of his worship. But you cannot live with him and not know whether he live in accordance with Christ's teaching. And so it was with Cicero. Read his works through from the beginning to the end, and you shall feel that you are living with a man whom you might accompany across the village green to church, should he be kind enough to stay with you over the Sunday. The urbanity, the softness, the humanity, the sweetness, are all there. But you shall not find it to be so with Cæsar, or Lucretius, or with Virgil. When you read his philosophical treatises it is as though you were discussing with some latter-day scholar the theories of Plato or of Epicurus. He does not talk of them as though he believed in them for his soul's guidance; nor do you expect it. All the interest that you have in the conversation would be lost were you to find such a faith as that. You would avoid the man as a pagan. The Stoic doctrine would so shock you when brought out for real wear, as to make you feel yourself in the company of some mad atheist, with a man for whose welfare, early or late in life, church-bells had never been rung. But with a man who has his Plato simply by heart, you can spend the long summer day in sweet conversation. So it is with Cicero. You lie down with him, looking out upon the sea at Cumæ, or sit with him beneath the plane-tree of Crassus, and listen while he tells you of this doctrine and the other. So Arcesilaus may be supposed to have said; and so Carneades laid down the law. It was that, and no more. But when he tells you of the place assigned to you in heaven, and how you are to win it, then he is in earnest."

THE SALMON OF CLOOTIE'S HOLE.

"I'm thinking that we'll do something to-day, Johnnie."

"I'm thinking that mysel'."

The first speaker was running a casting-line through the loop of a "Jock Scott," and the second was holding up the heavy rod to which the line was fastened, and watching the process with great interest. He was a very big man, with extremely long legs, dressed in old Harris tweeds. What elegance of form there might have been about the other was effectually concealed by his waders and little Mackintosh cape. Most people would have thought the outlook as well as the day rather dreary. It was well on in the year. Autumn had put her brilliant colours on the trees which lined the river's banks; indeed a good many leaves, sycamore and birch especially, had already fallen, and were floating limp and flat down the stream. It looked as if it was already raining up on the moors above, and seemed likely to be soon doing the same thing below. But though the rain was not quite to their taste (not that they in the least minded getting wet), these two men seemed tolerably satisfied with things, and had contented faces. The place they were in had in the gloomy morning rather a dour look. The river had scooped out for itself a great semicircular piece of the bank, and formed a big pool, wide, and black, and very deep, in which, even in that high state of the water, there was very little motion. On the farther side the bank was steep and precipitous, but where they were standing it shelved, and a wood of old dark Scotch firs grew close to the water, so close in some parts that it was difficult to fish it properly. It was a wild kind of place;

and no wonder, considering who sometimes took up his abode there. "Clootie's Hole" was its name, and any one in the strath could tell you the reason. "When the devil comes to Ross-shire, wherever he may spend the day, it's here he bides the night." That was what the people said, and indeed it was true enough. For though the dreadful being had not been seen for many years, there were old men yet alive in the neighbourhood who remembered hearing in their youth from their fathers how a man, who was coming home from the still he worked up on the hills, and who crossed the river just below the pool, was found in the morning with his head on the bank, and his body in the water, gibbering and mowing, and how he was never able to walk upright again, or explain what *It* was he had seen sitting in the gloomy hollow above. No earthly consideration in the shape of money or whisky would induce any man, woman, or child who knew this story to go there at dusk; and indeed most of them avoided the place altogether, and the grim tenant had it pretty much to himself. For it was only in high water, and when the most of the other pools were unfishable, that it was any use coming here. As a rule the water came in, passed round the half-circle, and went out again with little perceptible motion.

All being ready, one of the men waded out to a little spit of gravel and began to fish the pool, and then might be seen that anomaly so puzzling to an Eastern mind—the master commencing a day of very hard work and the servant sitting idle and watching him. There seemed, however, nothing incongruous about

it to them. The long-legged keeper found himself a comfortable seat on the bank, and lit his pipe, but he did not spend the time in gazing idly about; on the contrary, even when performing that nice operation, he never took his eyes off the water, he kept them fixed a little below where the line cut it, and his shout of "There he is!" was simultaneous with the same exclamation of the other. The fisherman waded back to shore, sat down also on the bank, and proceeded to light *his* pipe.

An ignorant person would have thought that these men were very easily pleased; it was but a little thing that had happened, and yet it seemed to give them intense pleasure. Just in a tiny swirl, a long cast from the spit, there was a momentary change in the surface of the water, so small that no one but a fisherman would have noticed it; but they knew that it was a salmon which had caused that small wave, and their hearts within them rejoiced.

After a few minutes' waiting, after just giving the fish time to think what a fool he was not to have been quicker, and to swear that he would never lose so good an opportunity again, we (for the fisherman is, if we may be pardoned the somewhat curious expression, ourselves) cross over again to the spit, and give him that opportunity. The "Jock Scott" goes inch by inch over the swirl, and moves in a tempting fashion across it, but there is no response. A trout-fisher would be disheartened, and give it up, but we know better: we know a little of Mr Salmon's tastes—how fastidious he is. Perhaps he suddenly remembered that he had been rather unwell the day before—a little bilious—and so, though with unwillingness, felt himself bound to refuse the pretty dainty.

So we give him something a little more sombre: we rather wanted to give it him in a smaller form, too, for this third try, but Johnnie advised no. He was quite sure that the fish was a fresh-run one, and so not likely to be very shy. He was equally sure that he was a big one, and therefore did not like the idea of having him on a small hook. So a medium-sized "Highlander" goes to him—no use, no sign at all. The day does not seem as if it was going to do so well, and while we begin to feel disheartened, Johnnie's face threatens to rival his legs in longitude. We show the fish a brilliant "Butcher:" we might have thrown in the baker and the candlestick-maker for all the good it does.

We go and sit on the bank tired of wading backwards and forwards and of changing flies. The day seemed dark to the two men; all satisfaction is gone from their faces. We get querulous, and Johnnie a little sulky. We are not quite satisfied with him—we fancy that his abrupt "Whatt?" when he does not quite catch what is being said to him, is a little disrespectful, though we had never noticed it to be so before; and we have an idea that he is also a little dissatisfied with us, and attributes the want of success to our not having done something or other which we ought to have done.

After a few minutes of silent smoking and gloomy meditation, we proposed going further down. "It's no good sitting here all day, Johnnie; we had better go on and try the next pool. We've put the fish down, and he's sulky. Don't you think we had better go on?"

"Yes," replied Johnnie, "if you want Angus MacHowdie to get him."

A reproachful look makes the good fellow a little ashamed, and

he hastens to explain himself. He says that he knows Angus is out to-day; that in the present state of the water the pool we are on is the best on the river, and that if more comes down it will be the only one fishable. He knows that Angus will slip in directly we move, and will then keep it to himself for the rest of the day, and very likely get our fish, which is sure (so Johnnie says) to take a fly later on. And in confirmation of the first part of his warning, he shows us with the glass—which a keeper out of a deer-forest never leaves behind—the shimmer of a rod behind a wall a long way up the stream. “And,” he adds, spitefully, “his ugly heid’ll no be far off. He has a fush, too; I can see it on the bank.”

To this we reply, “Oh, has he?—confound him!”

We hated Angus MacHowdie. He was the keeper of a gentleman who was not often down; and so he (Angus) had a great deal of time at his disposal, and spent most of it, during the season, on the river. He was a splendid fisherman—no better man in that respect ever walked in boots—but he fished too much and too often, we thought, for a keeper, and had no scruple at all in cutting you out, and taking your water if he could manage it. We often tried to cut *him* out. Once we walked all night across the hills, eight-and-twenty weary miles, with rod and gaff, in the hope of being before him at a certain pool; and as we reached it soon after four in the morning, we thought we had done him at last. He was sitting there, giving it a rest, when we arrived; and ever since then we had *hated* him. There was another peculiarity about Angus—he *never* caught a fish. Whether it was

that he kept them, or sold them, instead of sending them to his master, as he ought to have done, or whatever was the reason (we could believe any evil of him), he *never* caught a fish. Meet Angus on the road going home, and it was always the same story, even when we could swear that there *was* a fish, and a good one, too, in the skirts of his loose coat.

We speedily see the sense of Johnnie’s advice. We agree with him, and determine that Angus shall never have that fish at any rate; and we resolve that that pool shall be our pool for the day, come what will. In a little while our gentleman comes up. He has probably been watching us for some time; and as he sees that we are not likely to move of our own accord, he thinks it worth while to come and try and tempt us away. For (there is no rule without its exception) he has to-day not only one fish, but *two*.

Angus MacHowdie was a long thin man, getting on in years, but still very wiry and active, and, as we have said, a first-rate fisherman. He had a long, pale face; but its most prominent feature did not share the pallor of its surroundings; it stood out like a sun-tipped peak from a snow-covered glacier, if we may be allowed to compare what is very little and ugly with what is very great and beautiful. His clothes had once been dark, but were now of the peculiar greenish hue which long exposure to the weather brings on; and they were marked with many little ragged holes out of which obstinate flies had been cut or torn. He wore a close-fitting cap with lappets over the ears; and his eyes were small and sharp, and generally had a horrid twinkle in them.

It has been already mentioned that our feelings towards Angus

were not cordial, but they were probably never so far from being friendly as when we saw those two fish. He displayed them in a casual sort of manner, and there was, or we thought there was, a more than usually offensive look about him as he came up. We ignore his approach, pretending not to have seen him; but Angus little cares for that. He sits down on the bank at once without waiting for an invitation, and enters into friendly conversation with Johnnie.

"Holloa! Oh, good morning, Angus! You're in luck this morning. Two fish! Where did you get them? Not very clean run, eh?"

This was a most foolish remark, made without thinking, on the spur of the moment, and the result showed how much better it is always to stick to the truth.

"No varra," says Angus. They're no bad for me, though. I haena heuked ane for a fortnicht. They're a wee bittie diseased too, I'm thinking. There's a gey pucklie varmin on them."

As he spoke he flipped two or three sea-lice (the sure sign of a fresh-run salmon) from the steel-grey back of one of his prizes, and winked—we could almost have sworn he winked—at Johnnie.

We feel hot and disgusted at Angus, and at ourselves, chiefly at Angus. Johnnie might have given us a little help in such an awkward position, but he didn't. He sat looking seriously and enviously at the two beauties, and we resent the way in which he begins to chat with the enemy. For the moment we almost dislike Johnnie too.

It is evidently necessary somehow to get rid of Angus if we are to do anything, for we are sure that we can never fish the pool properly while he is sitting like an

incubus on the bank watching; and so we fall into error number two, and nearly tell another—story.

"Well, good morning—good morning, Angus, we must be"—"off," we are on the point of adding, but we pull up just in time—"at work," is the only ending we can think of, and it is a lame one, for it compels us to perform at once before him.

Angus enjoys our confusion,—he knew well enough what we wanted. The whole thing was, as a school-boy would say, "nuts" to him. The old wretch had found out, what we might have noticed too—namely, that the river was rising a little, and chances of sport diminishing in equal ratio; and so hearing from Johnnie that we were fixed there, he thought he might as well stop too. He showed no signs of moving,—he said he was in no hurry, had nothing to do, would not like to fish the pools in front of us (we knew that, and the reason too); and finally, having driven us half daft, he added insult to insult by offering us his own pet fly—"the ane I heuked the twa fush wi'."

It was wet, sure enough; but if he had sworn to the fact on his knees, we would never have believed that it had risen a fish for him that day. It was a small, dirty, muddy, feathered-looking thing; but it was not because of its insignificance or its dull colouring that we rejected it with scorn. Angus knew better than to offer us a hopeless fly, and if the river had been a little smaller it might have done well enough; but the gut was *nicked*, the little eye was worn nearly through, and if a salmon had taken it he would have taken it in more senses than one: the flap of his tail as he departed would have been all that we should have ever seen of him.

We were glad to find this out;

we took some pains to point it out to him, and felt a little comforted while he protested his innocence, and vowed that he had not noticed the weakness. We chuckled a little at the thought of having been too much for him this time; but when, after having settled him, we turned to our own book, we caught sight of him—was it possible!—winking again.

A regular elephant of a fly was picked out—a great long, bushy, gaudily-ribbed affair; for we had at last found out that the river was “waxing,” and that all chance would soon be gone, and once more crossed to the spit and began operations, not with much hope, as the pool had already been fished five times.

What does this sudden change mean? Why does Johnnie jump up like a Jack-in-the-box, upsetting Angus, who had been leaning over, and sending him head over heels down the bank? Why do we run madly into the water with a yell? There is good cause for all these proceedings, for we are “in a fish.” Surely there can be few sensations known to man which are able to send such a shock through his system, and make his heart beat so fast, as those which thrill through him when he strikes a fish—in that one moment when a grilse feels like a salmon, and a salmon like a sack of coals. In an infinitesimal period of time—in the twentieth part of a second—despair has been driven out and hope sent bounding in. Hurrah! and the feeling of intense pleasure is in our case heightened by the wild hope, for we saw the upset, that Angus has at last broken his neck. But this is no time for making sure; if he has, he must wait patiently for a little, perhaps for more than a little, till we can attend to him, for we have that at the end of our rod which is

likely to keep us pretty well engaged for some considerable time.

It was about twelve when this event took place; at three the scene had shifted some way down the river. Look at this man who is sitting on the soaking bank trying to light a pipe, and with shaking hand protecting his last match from the wind and the now heavy rain. His face is very red and hot, his cap is gone, and his hair is in a dreadful state of confusion. His cape has gone too, and he is evidently thoroughly wet. His knuckles and his nose show signs of numerous small scars and scratches, as if he had been violently rubbing them against rocks and thorns—and indeed he has. But the ineffable contentment of his smile makes one forget all other deficiencies. Though he is for the moment unoccupied, the salmon is not lost—the long legs and flying coat-tails of Johnnie, who is in close attendance on him, may be seen rapidly turning a bend in the river; and the knowledge of this fact, and the thought of Angus MacHowdie going home in a cart with one broken leg, perhaps two, almost make the cup of happiness overflow. We (for the dishevelled object is ourselves) are only resting a moment, and trying to get back a little of the breath we have been so liberally expending for the last three hours.

No man ever saw such a fish as that. To begin with, he was a big, clean-run, powerful salmon; but if he had had only these qualities to rely on, we should probably have drunk his health long before. When he was hooked, instead of bolting right away or doing as fish so treated generally do, he came at once up to the top, lay flat on the surface of the water and beat it till he was the centre of a circle of foam. We soon found out the

reason. He was foul hooked ; missing the fly with his mouth, it had caught him in the tail as he turned over, and having free and full power over his strong body he soon proceeded to make the most of it. Finding that this did no good, he stopped to consider what was the matter, and what proceedings were necessary to free himself from the horrid insect which stuck so closely to him and which made his tail so dreadfully uncomfortable. It seemed extraordinary to him that the little thing he had jumped at should cause him so much annoyance and be so difficult to shake off, and he sank himself to the bottom of the pool and swam slowly round it, rubbing himself violently, as is the way of salmon, against the gravel and stones there. This had no effect ; the pressure from some unseen power from above continued to increase, and then for the first time an inkling of the truth flashed across his mind. He remembered that once, long ago, when spending the early spring in the sea with an aged relative of great experience, he had been told of the possibility of such a thing happening to him, and warned against eating his dinner without first making sure that it was all right. "For," said his old relation, "many of our friends have suffered greatly ; some have even suddenly disappeared from our ken by mysterious means unknown as yet to our race, though they are in the course of being investigated by a commission." But then he had always understood that these dangerous fragments of food flew at the intending diner and attacked him in the mouth, whereas he was suffering most acute anguish in the tail. He was not, however, in a humour to deliberate very nicely on this incongruity just then ; and while making a mental resolve to

discuss the point (a point which had then a grim significance for him) with his hoary old friend at some future time, he endeavoured with all his might to get an opportunity for doing so, for he had at length to acknowledge to himself that he was no longer a free agent, but was being gently directed, tailwards, by some invisible power with which the gaudy fly had something to do. That he, the finest fish that ever swam into the North Sea, the acknowledged king of all, should be treated thus, seemed unbearable. He knew that no other salmon had such a silver coat as he had, that none possessed the great strength that he possessed ; and after remaining quiet for a moment or two, though every nerve and muscle in his body was vibrating with thought, he put all that strength forth.

A series of tremendous somersaults only acted as a breather ; far out of the river he leapt, as if trying to reach the stars ; but, though while in the air the pressure on his tail relaxed, and he fancied himself free, so soon as he again touched the water he found the cruel strain still on, and maddened by fear and anger, he rushed out of the pool and tore down the river.

Away he went, and an awful dance he gave us ; as soon as he had exhausted all his manœuvres—after he had gone through the various stages of bolting, leaping out of the water, rubbing himself along the bottom, sulking, and finally beating his tail against the line till the horrid feel of the vibrations he sent up through the rod almost made us sick—he began again and went through the whole performance without ever a mistake. Never had we had to do with such a fish as this—the heavy rod, the large fly, and the strong tackle seemed to have no power over him

at all; and now after three hours' great exertion, both on his part and ours, he seemed but little the worse, and had half killed us.

As well as the waders, heavily weighted with water, would let us, we run after Johnnie, relieve him of his charge, and again urge on our wild career. We had noticed for some time that this long-legged specimen of humanity seemed uneasy; and now, after looking cautiously round, and at the river below, and the hills behind, and moreover, choosing a time when the fish was taking a little rest, he came up very close, and in a faint whisper, and with much blowing in our ear, delivered himself of the following awful piece of intelligence—

"It's joust Auld Clootie himself," and his hair stood on end.

We were very much alarmed. Probably no man, however brave he might be, would have been otherwise than alarmed.

Our hair stood on end too.

But just as we were on the point of breaking the line which connected us with so undesirable an acquaintance, we reflected that Johnnie might possibly be wrong. We bethought us of the desperate work of the last three hours, which, if he had given us, we equally had given him, and we argued that though Johnnie had good grounds—strong grounds—for his assertion, yet he was wrong. At any rate we felt we could not afford to throw away such a chance.

The river was now rising rapidly; places that had been pools when we began to fish were now masses of swirling water, and the streams were being turned into roaring, raging, foaming torrents. Bits of stick, branches of trees, and at last larger pieces of wood which had been lying high and dry on the bank, began to come down, and

some of them, as they washed past, threatened to come athwart the line and smash everything. As the "whish" of the passing sprites of men terrified the Ancient Mariner, so did these flying dangers frighten us. It was difficult to avoid them, it was difficult to guide the fish; in some parts he would not, in some he could not, rest, owing to the force of the current; and it was only the great strength of our tackle, and constant unremitting laborious care on our part which kept us together.

We knew that a couple of hundred yards or so below where we were was a very bad bit of ground: a high steep bank, rocky and thick with trees, had to be passed; and we were by no means sure, considering the heavy flood, that we should be able to get along the top as quick as the fish went below, for of course the least check would be fatal.

Johnnie's conduct at this critical period was anything but what it ought to have been. We wanted him to be at hand to pull down a sapling or a branch when necessary, or to take the rod for a moment in a bad place; but when we looked round for him he was sitting on the bank with a countenance which expressed every phase of fear and misery, taking off—actually taking off—his boots! In ordinary circumstances he would have scorned to stay a moment, even if his stockings had been full of red-hot shot or tenpenny nails, but now fear had worked upon him to such an extent that (to be away from the fish) he had sat down under the miserable excuse of examining them for stones, and was pretending busily to pick them out. Violent and shrill remonstrances from us at length brought him up, and with great reluctance he suffered himself once more to look at the salmon; but he was a little cheered—a little

of his fear blew away as he did so, for it was evident that the hard work had begun to tell—the fish was getting “sick.” And now a dreadful thing happened—an event took place calculated to make the boldest and the most red-faced man turn pale. The fish, in a bit of quieter water, rested a minute, and then bolted in to the bank, leaving, in spite of our efforts, a long bit of line slack. But he had so often tried on the same manœuvre without success that it had ceased to cause us much alarm. We reeled up very rapidly, and sure enough he was still on. Away he went again, and then—the line *kincked*,—one of those extraordinary and inexplicable knots appeared which all fishermen know; and between sixty and seventy yards of line were locked up on the reel as useless as if they had been at Inverness. The salmon was struggling madly, and almost making the top ring of the rod touch the butt at the end of the forty others. A loud comprehensive wail from us, expressing at once grief, anger, disgust, surprise, horror, and apprehension of evil, and a dismal howl from Johnnie, combining all these attributes, with the additional one of fear, announced the taking place of this catastrophe. Things were now all in favour of the salmon, and very much against us, and it was with almost hopeless hearts that we followed him down the rocks.

We got over them,—somehow or other we got past, though how we did it, neither the one nor the other of us could ever tell. Cut and bruised, lashed in the face by the swinging branches, stumbling, now on the rocks above, now on the stones below, staggering, tumbling, slipping into cracks, with much yelling, and much loss of breath and language, we got on to the

smooth grass of the great meadow on the other side, alive though faint, and, what was more to the purpose, with the fish still on. Fifty times was he on the point of breaking us; fifty times did some mere chance keep him ours. Probably two men in worse plight never stood on grass, and the fish below was in little better trim. The line was much frayed and worn, but it was a miracle that it had stood at all.

Once again we looked on him as ours. If we could keep him in the small pool which lay below the bad place we had just passed, he must be ours. In ordinary water this pool was dead and motionless, but now both at its head and tail there was a powerful current. Johnnie, who during the last ten minutes had been momentarily expecting that the rocks would fall on his head, or that the pretended salmon would run at him and carry him off to be devoured, had now got over his fright; when he found that the fish in the bad passage, and with so short a line, could not get off, his spirits rose, his courage came back, and he crept down to the water's edge with the gaff to administer the *coup de grace*. Twenty times had the cork been off that instrument, but never yet had he had an opportunity of administering it with success. The fish, almost a passive agent now, got into the current; cruelly did we give him the butt, we almost thought that the hook would have cut through under the great pressure caused by his weight. For a few moments it seemed as if he would come into the stone where Johnnie was, the furthest out stone of all. But the slight rest had renewed a little of his strength; he made a feeble struggle, got more and more into the current, right into it, and then slipped quietly

over the little fall at the tail, and went into the stream below. Once more hope died away. We had no more bad ground to pass, no more rocks; on the contrary, the river ran now for a long way through the great smooth meadow, but it ran with an angry roar of swollen waves, with all the pools and quiet reaches blotted out, and with no place where a fish, even if so inclined, could rest. The meadow was about two hundred yards long, and then the public road crossed the river by a bridge.

And now Johnnie risked his life for his master! If he could get on to an outstanding rock it was just possible that he might be within stroke of the salmon; and though the chance was a poor one, yet he tried it. Jumping from stone to stone he made his way out; but even *he* could not do the impossible, even his legs and eyes failed him at the pinch. Racing parallel with the fish to get first to the point, Johnnie slipped and fell into the water, fortunately on the side nearest to the bank we were on. For the first time we forgot our charge. That Angus should suffer was very right and proper, but that Johnnie should be drowned the same day was too much of a good thing. Johnnie, however, was not to be drowned so easily. He appeared in a moment or two spluttering, gesticulating wildly with the still held gaff, and waving us to go on, and seeing that he could get out by himself, on we went. But why? It would have been better to have broken then: nothing could save us now. On we drove to the fateful bridge, a bridge impossible to go under at any time, as the water filled up the whole width of the arch, and doubly so then. The fish was like

a chip of cork in the swollen stream, and had as little power. Nearer and nearer we came—the bridge seemed to be rushing up to us; the roar of the river grew louder, and the wind on the exposed ground made the rain fiercely cut the face; the whole thing seemed like a horrid nightmare. Then we thought of saving the rod, but before we could collect our scattered faculties it was too late. There was a yell from us, a wild howl a hundred yards up the bank, a crash against the stone-work of the bridge, and then the rod gave up the bend it had had for so many hours, and tumbled in picturesque confusion through the rings.

A miserable dinner was only interrupted by the following communication: Enter little Highland waiting-maid. "Please, sir, it was Angus MacHowdie was here. He was wanting to know, sin' Johnnie is sae sair hurt, if you'll be ha'eing him for the fushing to-morrow?"

Afterwards, the rain having ceased, and the night being fine though dark, we light a pipe, and strolling down to the bridge, the scene of so much woe, stand looking down into the cruel current. Presently we are aware that we are not alone—that some one else is also contemplating it, and by the length of his legs it can be none other than Johnnie. We go up to him, and we think—we are not sure—but we think that there is a tear in one of his eyes. "Well, Johnnie, what are you thinking of?" No answer. We go a little closer. It *is* a tear. "Holloa, Johnnie! what are you thinking of?"

"I'm thinking that we didna do sae muckle after a'."

THE GOVERNMENT AND IRELAND.

To pass from the beginning of the session of 1880 to that of 1881 is to completely change the whole political atmosphere and surroundings. The general election, the change of Government, and the consequences which have followed, have altered all the issues of political controversy. They still, however, relate to the same subjects—Ireland, the East of Europe, India, and the Cape. With regard to the three last, a long, wordy, and unmeaning war has ceased. Instead of listening to interminable and inconsistent harangues against the mode in which peace with honour had been achieved, we may contemplate, with as much equanimity as we can, the results of successive interferences with an existing settlement and an established policy. The rising in the Transvaal and the prolonged war in Basutoland are the chief incidents in affairs at the Cape, and occasion the greatest anxiety. In India we are asked to discuss whether it will not be wise and prudent, against the advice of nearly every Indian soldier of distinction, to abandon Candahar, leave Affghanistan to the mercy of military adventurers, and for ourselves to scuttle out of the country as fast as we can, in a mode the most likely to lower our character and *prestige* throughout the whole of Central Asia. In the East of Europe, the Conference of Berlin has served the double purpose of weakening the force of the settlement made by the Congress and of stimulating the Greeks to aggressive action. The desire to undo the work of their predecessors, and to justify the declamation of years about coercing the Turk, about the concerted action of the Powers, and the rights of

Greece, has gravely imperilled the peace of Europe during the recess, and rendered an outbreak of war among the probable contingencies of the new year and the new session. The alarm of the recess centred round the trumpety station of Dulcigno; the anxiety at present is with regard to the Greeks, who have steadily armed in reliance on the English Premier and his Radical following, and incurred enormous sacrifices with a view to a warlike vindication of the proposals or decrees of the Conference. The wanton disturbance of the Treaty of Berlin is now attributed to France; but France ostentatiously declines responsibility and refuses the initiative. England at least cannot be absolved from responsibility, for without her approval the Conference would never have been held. Nor would Turkey have been without that approval excluded from the Conference, nor the menace uttered that the Turks should be compelled to adopt the new frontier. The naval demonstration, and the sequestration of Turkish revenues, were distinctly English expedients. War with dishonour is a by no means improbable substitute for the peace insured by the Treaty of Berlin; and the whole situation is due, as Lord Beaconsfield emphatically declared, to an abuse of party feeling in the British Isles, a recklessness of political hostility and of rash pledges never before exhibited by the most responsible statesmen of the day. Fortunately the Russian troops were out of the country, Austria placed on the road to Constantinople, and the protective alliance between Germany and Austria completed before the general election. The issues in the East of

Europe left for the mismanagement of blundering and impotence are, comparatively speaking, minor issues, though they may be made to involve a somewhat serious war. The element of Russian aggression, at least, has been eliminated for the present as far as the East of Europe is concerned. Whether or not Russian interference will not be provoked or invited in regard to our Central Asian interests, by the new policy with respect to Afghanistan, remains to be seen. The meeting of Parliament has not removed the anxiety upon that head which prevailed in the recess. Lord Lytton's admirable speech placed the issue clearly and satisfactorily before the country. There is time for Parliament to express its opinion; and for the sake of public satisfaction at home, as well as of the safety and tranquillity of our Indian empire, we hope that the question may be thoroughly debated, and the opinions of the chief military authorities published.

If blundering and impotence are the easily discerned characteristics of our recent foreign policy, the yet more disastrous results of the administration of Ireland during the recess have served to accumulate a weight of responsibility upon this unhappy Ministry which must render it an object of pity and derision to even a Turkish pasha. The invectives of Mr Gladstone against the maladministration of Turkish provinces, and against the general neglect of its duties by the Government at Constantinople, cease to be menacing, and become somewhat ridiculous when the state of Ireland under his own *régime* is taken into account, and considered in reference to all the authority and the apt organisation at the disposal of a British Minister, compared to the ineffective instruments

of a Turkish Sultan. And when those disastrous results are distinctly traceable to glaring indiscretions of policy and speech, to undue subordination of Ministerial duty to party exigencies, to that abuse of party feeling which has been the prolific source of national and international mischief, there are no circumstances of mitigation which can alleviate the disgrace of the parallel so forcibly suggested by the miserable circumstances of the time.

The meeting of Parliament immediately suggests a review of the Ministerial policy with regard to Ireland, and of the way in which that policy has been influenced by the result of the general election, by Mr Gladstone's agitation and pledges, by the childish eagerness to reverse in all respects the policy of the preceding Government, regardless of consequences. A succession of bad harvests had increased agrarian and other crime, but immediate distress had been met by measures of relief, supplemented by private charity. It was inevitable that the influence of the Home Rule faction and of the Land League should have been increased; and at the time of the dissolution of Parliament, their schemes were laid before the constituencies. While the Liberal leaders were declaiming incessantly and at unexampled length against the treaty which had secured European peace, and the masterly statesmanship which had secured the treaty, Lord Beaconsfield stepped forward in his address to the Duke of Marlborough, described the practical issue before the country, to the astonishment of less sagacious politicians, as one which related chiefly and almost exclusively to Ireland. He warned the country that a considerable agitation was going on; that Ireland

was distracted by "a danger in its ultimate results scarcely less disastrous than pestilence and famine;" that a portion of its population was attempting to sever the tie which bound it to Great Britain. No sooner was this warning uttered than it was received by the Liberal leaders and organs with unmitigated ridicule. Mr Gladstone flatly denied that there was any foundation for it, and declared that Ireland was in a state of comfort and satisfaction unknown to its previous history. The consequence was that, in a spirit of utter recklessness, in the satisfaction of a party animosity which was blind to the interests and even the safety of the country, the future Ministers and their more prominent followers proceeded, by election speeches and platform pledges made to secure the Irish and extreme Radical vote, to cut from beneath their feet every ground upon which they could base an application to Parliament to continue even the mild measure of coercion provided by the expiring Peace Preservation Act. They came into office with their hands voluntarily tied behind them. They found awaiting them the opinion of seventy resident magistrates as to the state of the Irish districts. Those magistrates were, many of them, in favour of the severe coercion of the Act of 1870, others of still more stringent legislation. The late Chief Secretary handed them a draft of a Continuance Bill; but the new Ministers were confident that they at least could rely on Irish loyalty and good sense. The Duke of Marlborough warned them that they "would have to bear the heavy responsibility of any consequences, possibly fatal, that might follow." He entreated them at least to re-enact one of the provisions, which forbade the car-

rying of arms in party processions. He described the condition of the country, and appealed to the Government not to part with the very slight and mild repressive measures by which alone it was possible to maintain law and order. But all was of no avail. Mr Gladstone, on the first night of this session, explained that he could not have faced the "long, angry, and embittered controversy" with his own followers which a proposal to renew the Act would have occasioned. His polemical language and its consequences had followed him into politics, and done him and the country more mischief than was to be measured by an Austrian apology. It placed a weapon in the hands of Home-Rulers and Radicals with which it was impossible for him to cope. The acceptance of the Irish policy of his predecessors, however essential to the interests of the nation, would have exposed him at once to a raking fire from his deluded and exasperated followers. The humiliation would have been too great, the consequences to his own position too serious. Ireland, therefore, and the unhappy Irish, must be delivered over to the mercies of the League, with such protection as the ordinary law can afford against a widespread, armed, desperate conspiracy. They must pay the costs of the wild Mid-Lothian agitation, and consent to be offered up as the first victims to the most unscrupulous pledges ever given by a statesman. And so the Queen's Speech, on the 20th May, announced that there would be "no exceptional legislation in abridgment of liberty;" in other words, no limit to the rising tyranny of the League, no fetter upon its merciless action. The Queen's Ministers would rely on Irish loyalty and good sense, and on the provisions

of the ordinary law; and the Irish people must put up with such protection as a helpless Executive could afford. It so happened that an unwillingness to abridge liberty was no reason for discontinuing the Act of 1875. But mild as were the additional powers granted by that Act, the Ministry refused them. Lord Beaconsfield deprecated their refusal, fixed them with the responsibility, and warned them of the increase of agrarian crime which would inevitably follow. The Government decided to leave the Land League and the Home-Rulers in unfettered possession of the field, and to brave the dangers of which Lord Beaconsfield in his manifesto and his speech had warned them. An abortive Compensation for Disturbance Bill was their grand legislative proposal; but an excellent harvest removed the distress which that bill was designed to meet. Parliament was prorogued on the 7th September.

Then there followed for the next two months a scene of wild disorder, havoc, and confusion. The consequences occurred which every person responsible for the government of Ireland had foretold, and which were the inevitable results of uncontrolled and audacious conspiracy. It seems almost incredible that her Majesty's Ministers, knowing that such conspiracy existed, that it was supported from America, and that it possessed a complete organisation, and was powerfully and capably led, should have failed to renew the existing restrictions against at least the importation and carrying of arms. The experience of the last few months must have convinced every reasonable politician that reckless pledges in opposition involve wilful imprudence in office. It is part of the heavy price which we must pay for our sys-

tem of party government, a system which, tempered by patriotism and guarded by ordinary magnanimity from abuse, is one of the strongest guarantees for liberty and good government. But if mitigating circumstances may be pleaded, and possibly allowed, in respect of the policy which, on the formation of a new Government, tentatively abolished even mild repression, what can be said of persisting in that policy for two months whilst outrage and revolt and terror spread through the land? Two months passed away. The Government decided to appeal to the law courts, to stigmatise the proceedings of the conspirators as criminal, to refer them to an Irish jury, but, at the same time, to persist in the fatal policy of inaction, of blundering and impotence, of which the first-fruits, gathered in by the 2d November, have been since graphically described by their own Attorney-General in the law courts at Dublin.

From that speech it appears that the case *for* the Government, on the strength of which they seek a conviction against Mr Parnell and his associates at the bar of criminal justice, is that a conspiracy existed all through the autumn, not to effect a change of the law by constitutional means, but for the purpose of overriding that law, of destroying rights which existed under it, of enforcing the will of the conspirators, under the specious name of the unwritten law of Ireland, by means of terrorism, outrage, and murder. The Attorney-General undertook to prove that the conspirators resorted to contrivances intended "to make a man's life so miserable that he would rather die than live,"—intended to "bring the landlords to their knees,"—to "crush them." This he under-

took to do out of the conspirators' own mouths. Besides exciting ill-feeling and indignation and hatred to the utmost possible pitch against the landlords, the common language with regard to them was that they were land-robbers, to be swept from the earth, shot like vermin, treated to a rope's length at every road-crossing. The very men who created this agitation had by their callings nothing whatever to do with either the possession, ownership, or cultivation of land. There had been a splendid harvest, and there was no exceptional distress. Mr Parnell himself, Mr Dillon, and others, had distinctly avowed that the object of agitation and of the Land League had practically little or nothing to do with any grievances connected with tenure. The object was declared in so many words to be "to break down and defeat the English garrison, which held Ireland for England;" and Mr Parnell declared that he would not have taken his coat off for the work but that the ultimate object was the making of Ireland mistress of her own destinies. To sweep away landlordism, and to keep a firm grip of the land and harvest, were openly and ostentatiously recommended and enforced; while the ulterior object of separation from England was not less emphatically avowed. The success of the League down to November, the date of the prosecution, was such as to show to every one that the ordinary law had broken down, and that the Executive were unable to cope with the serious revolt which had taken place, and which was rapidly spreading. Local branches, or conspiracies to aid farmers in refusing to carry out their engagements, were established all over the country. Those who were not ready to agree to the rules of these local branches were

to be denounced as worse than robbers, and to be treated as a mad dog was treated. The League had, to the knowledge of the Government, "heaps of money, and an illimitable draft upon their credulous friends in America and Australia." They had, to the knowledge of the Government, as proved by the Attorney-General, been openly preaching murder, and openly acknowledging that they preached sedition and committed seditious acts, declaring also that they were ready to carry out their principles at the point of the bayonet. On the 17th October the people had been called upon to drill and march to and from the meetings; and at the beginning of that month Mr Parnell had called upon the people at Kilkenny to join the League in order "to organise a strike against rent upon the estate of every rack-renting landlord;" the object being that rents should thenceforward be fixed by the Land League, and that they should be at such rate only as the tenant found it convenient or agreeable to pay, after satisfying all the necessities of himself and family. Thus throughout the autumn, and down to the meeting of the Cabinet in the early part of November, the Government knew that there was a powerful, widely spread, widely supported conspiracy for the purpose of injuring and bringing to their knees the present owners of land, by preventing the payment of debts due to them by law; by obstructing the enforcement of legal writs; by obstructing the processes of courts of justice; by taking care that the writs of execution to levy debts should be fruitless; by taking care that if writs of execution were executed they should be undone by reinstating the tenants on the land. This daring plot was carried out by

every species of agrarian outrage ; by force of arms ; by nightly raids of armed men ; by terrorism which prevented appeals to law and enforced the behests of the League ; by murder and by Boycottism. In the end the Queen's Government was completely superseded in large parts of Ireland by the authority of the League ; the administration of justice was completely defied and overawed ; the functions of the Executive were at an end. At last Mr Parnell, the real ruler of a large portion of Ireland, publicly, at Waterford, on the 5th December, addressed, in the name of the League, this significant language to the public and the Government :—

“We declare that it is the duty of every Irishman to free his country if he can. We refuse to inflict needless suffering on the masses of our people. We will work by constitutional means (*i.e.*, the means just described), *so long as it suits us to do so.* (*Tremendous cheering.*) We refuse to plunge this country into the horrors of civil war, when she has not a chance ; but I ask any man at this board, I ask every true Irishman, be he priest or be he layman, whether he would not consider it the first duty of an Irishman to do what he could to enable his country to take her place among the nations of the world. . . . I call for no vain, no useless sacrifice. I do not wish to be misunderstood for a moment. Our *present* path is within the lines of the constitution. England has given us that constitution for her purposes—we will use it for ours ; and if I ever call, or if anybody over whom I have any influence, ever calls, upon the people of Ireland to go beyond the line of that constitution, we shall do so openly and above-board, not by any subterfuge. We shall not ask any people to share a risk that we are unwilling to encounter ourselves. But *for the present*, taking our stand within the limits of the constitution, relying upon organised parliamentary action, relying upon organised national action

at home, I believe that we have funds sufficient to achieve our ends, and we call upon you as one man, if you believe in us, if you believe in our honesty, to stand by us and to help us with that ability, with that genius which God has given to Irishmen, confident in ourselves and in yourselves, and in the future of our common country.”

A further manifestation of the same spirit was given by the same speaker on the same day—when he advocated further organisation :—

“I feel convinced that in five or six years' time at the outside, we shall have broken the power of the English Government to govern in Ireland, and shall have compelled them to restore to the Irish people the right of self-government.”

Mr Justice Fitzgerald's charge to the grand jury for the Munster winter assizes was made on the 7th December. He pointed out that, throughout the whole country, except the province of Connaught, there was at the summer assizes a very small amount of crime indeed to be dealt with ; but that, after the return from the summer vacation at the end of October, everything was changed ; that some organisation had “reduced some districts in the country to anarchy and confusion, little, if at all, differing from civil war ;” and that it was obvious that they had to deal with an armed population. After going through all the extraordinary offences—*i. e.*, offences which strike at the whole foundation of society—threatening letters, armed interference with civil process, forcible possession, arson, maiming cattle, malicious injuries, attacks on dwelling-houses, outrages by gangs of night marauders, and pointing out that the offenders generally represented themselves as the emissaries of the Land League, he concluded in the following language :—

"In several districts, embracing a large portion of Munster, true liberty has ceased to exist, and intolerable tyranny prevails. Life is not secure, right is disregarded, the process of the law cannot be enforced, and dishonesty and lawlessness disgrace the land."

Mr Justice Barry at Waterford, on the 9th December, said :—

"There has prevailed, for some months past, in many parts of this country, a determined spirit of lawlessness and insubordination ; and defiance of and contempt for the law have been manifested in offences against the person and property, more or less serious and aggravated, by that class commonly known as agrarian."

Mr Baron Dowse at Galway, on 10th December, after referring to the condition of county Leitrim and county Sligo—formerly very peaceable districts, though now infected by the disease which seems to have its permanent location in the county Mayo—described the latter and notorious county as displaying "an appalling amount of crime."

"There have been committed in the county Mayo, since the return was laid before the judge four months ago, 236 indictable offences, leaving out of consideration 888 summary offences."

It appeared, however, from the rest of the judge's charge, that out of the 236 indictable offences only 12 were committed for trial,—215 people having declined to give information. With regard to county Galway, the learned judge observed that there had been 291 indictable offences committed within the limits referred to, of which only 12 had come to trial,—278 people having declined to prosecute. He went on, after this terrible picture of crime and terrorism, to say : "These papers do not show all the crime that has been committed, nor do they exhibit the condition of the

country to its full extent ;" and concluded :—

"If this state of affairs is allowed to continue much longer, immediate danger to Ireland will be the consequence, and ultimate disgrace to the empire of which she forms a part. No true friend of Ireland, no real lover of liberty, as distinguished from licence, can dare approve of the state of things I lay before you. I speak not alone in the interests of the victims of this reign of terror, as it is properly called, but also in the interests of the poor people themselves, who are too often the mere tools of men more crafty and designing than themselves. I speak, moreover, in the interests of the whole country, which in every part—from north to south, from east to west, in the study of the professional man, in the ware room of the trader, in the house of the country gentleman, and in the cottage of the farmer—feels the terrible influence of this terrible disease, some of the most dangerous symptoms of which I have laid before you."

Her Majesty's Ministers, however, surveyed the situation with the heroic calmness and firm endurance of men who are themselves in no peril. Their organs brought out, with their usual self-complacency, the saying of Cavour, "Any one can govern with a state of siege ;" it being quite clear that her Majesty's Ministers could not govern without. This double-distilled essence of political wisdom enabled all the wiseacres amongst us to shake their heads, top-heavy with superior virtue and sagacity, at the coercive proclivities of Tories. A reign of terror had been substituted for the Queen's Government, but Parliament was still not to be summoned. The functions of the Executive were completely superseded, and the administration of justice at an end ; but, exclaimed the wiseacres, you cannot draw an indictment against a whole nation. They

overlooked the circumstance that a whole nation was seeking protection from intolerable tyranny,—the outrages of many whom Lord Hartington himself denounces as “miscreants.” Accordingly it was illiberal to ask for further powers. The evil day must be postponed till the 6th January, when the conspirators would at least have had four clear months of it, and an experience would have been endured which will effectually scare capital from the country—*i.e.*, the fund wherewith to supply wages for people, and improvements to land and agriculture; and will have spread a spirit of lawless violence likely to increase incalculably the difficulties of all future Governments. Political superstition has never been carried to such an extreme before. Whatever danger there might be, upon principle, in granting extraordinary powers to the Executive, must surely be moonshine, when the champions of liberty will themselves be donees of the powers, and when they will be watched by other champions, only too eager to catch them tripping, and by sixty or seventy Home-Rulers, who will be on the spot to expose and resent every abuse. It is almost impossible for practical men to accept, as an adequate explanation of the supineness, neglect, and inaction of the Government, the excuse that it still remained to demonstrate the insufficiency of the ordinary law. The necessity for extraordinary powers was absolute, and had been foretold; and it was well known that they could be had for the asking. The disastrous delay which arose was due entirely to the false position in which the Liberal leaders placed themselves at the general election, and which the people of this coun-

try and of Ireland, have had to redeem by suffering and discredit.

The Ministerial explanation was anxiously looked for upon the meeting of Parliament. During the recess the only light which had been thrown upon their conduct was derived from the frequency of Cabinet councils, the frequent journeys of Mr Forster backwards and forwards from Dublin to London, and the speeches at Birmingham; for those at the Mansion House may be dismissed as vague and delusive generalities. On the 17th November, whilst all these atrocities were taking place which occasioned the significant declarations and warnings by the Irish judges, the members for Birmingham addressed their constituents. Mr Chamberlain ran glibly over the various merits of Mr Gladstone, Mr Bright, and Mr Forster, and entreated the Irish nation not to stultify by violence the good intentions of those sympathetic statesmen. He knew, he said, that the state of affairs was exaggerated by panic; and by implication, a man of his firm mind was not easily thrown off his balance. He entreated the Irish people not to discredit their cause, and English Liberals not to be diverted by crime and outrage from their duty. “It might be the work of Tories to crush out disaffection. It was the better and higher work of Liberals to find out the cause of disaffection, and to remove it.” And accordingly there followed the well-worn platitude that you must not destroy liberty in order to preserve law; which, applied to Ireland, simply means that a reign of terror may be established in defiance of law—that the Executive, in the name of true liberty, must abdicate its functions—and that statesmen, responsible for life and property, must not apply to Parliament for

the only means of securing them ; because they themselves, although staunch and sturdy champions of liberty, could not trust themselves, or expect to be trusted, to use those means aright.

"There could be nothing more unconstitutional than, *at the first outbreak of disorder*, to proceed to suspend all the safeguards of liberty of a nation without, at all events, at the same time inquiring into and endeavouring to remove the causes which might have promoted and instigated that disorder."

No one but a very superficial politician would ever have found scope for self-complacency in such a sonorous platitude as that. The whole question hinges upon whether, in the middle of November, there was "a first outbreak of disorder," or, in the language of the judges, an intolerable tyranny, firmly established, under which life, liberty, and property were not secure. The declaration, however, was clear that there should be no coercion without remedial legislation. Then came Mr Bright, who, a few weeks later, in the midst of all the misery which has overtaken Ireland and the Irish people, could write with glee of the landlords "running for their lives." He described the great proprietors, to whose merits recent letters to the 'Times' have done full justice, as having settled in Ireland, "as an English garrison in a conquered country"—exactly the language of the conspirators. He admitted that there was a "social revolt of a very strange and extraordinary character"—a rising not so much against the Government as against the owners of the soil. "They are demanding the overthrow of the system under which they assert that there is no adequate reward for their industry,

and no security for the homes of their families." And then he proceeded to denounce that system, upon principles equally applicable to landed tenure in England, but without displaying any special acquaintance with the circumstances of Ireland. His point of view was, that

"Until now, for the last hundred years and for longer, the English Government and the English Parliament had always come to the rescue of the landed proprietors. England has done it in the past, and the question now is, whether it will do it in the future."

He considered that the "landlords should put into some shape any propositions which they had for delivering themselves and their tenantry from the present condition of things." He taunted them with making no sign, but with merely demanding "force, the English Government, the armed police, increased military assistance, and protection ; and, it might be, further measures of restriction and coercion." And then he laid down the principle on which the Cabinet have obviously acted, rather than break up the Government and the party.

"Force," he declared, "is not a remedy. There are times when it may be necessary, and when its employment may be absolutely unavoidable ; but for my part I should rather regard and discuss measures of relief as measures of remedy than measures of force, whose influence is only temporary, and in the long-run, I believe, is disastrous."

This was the only vindication of that policy of inaction which prevailed in the Cabinet. The class animosity is as conspicuous as in the famous letter about the "landlords running for their lives." Its meaning was that the victims of the Land League should make their

own terms with the conspirators, for the Executive would take no step to restore order until the conspirators were satisfied. The Land League might well be triumphant, for during the whole of the recess their principles predominated in the Cabinet of the Queen.

Under these circumstances the meeting of Parliament was looked forward to with great anxiety and increasing doubt as to the possibility of a Ministerial exculpation. A feeble attempt was made in the Queen's Speech to suggest that a great diminution of distress, owing to an abundant harvest, had been anticipated, and, impliedly, had justified the discontinuance of exceptional legislation. But admission rapidly followed of the "alarming character" of the Irish social condition, of agrarian crimes beyond the experience of recent years, of widespread frustration of justice, of an extended system of terror, paralysing almost the exercise of private rights and the performance of civil duties. The only excuses for having allowed such a state of things to grow up were, that an abundant harvest had been foreseen; that the police had been exceptionally active; that the state of things was new, with little of available guidance from former precedent; that it was right to use exclusively those ordinary powers of the law which the "present circumstances of the country" had amply proved to be insufficient.

The obvious inadequacy of these excuses is, that while the admission as to the alarming character of the state of Ireland, and of the insufficiency of the ordinary law to cope with it, is as complete as words can make it, there is no hint that the condition of Ireland is one whit more alarming now than in November last, or that additional

powers were one whit less necessary then than now, in the words of her Majesty's Speech, "not only for the vindication of order and public law, but likewise to secure on behalf of my subjects, protection for life and property, and personal liberty of action." It is left entirely to the reader to judge for himself when that necessity arose. No determining principle of action is even alleged, beyond saying that we must not be too much in a hurry to suspend the constitution. The case against the Ministry is that, on their own showing, the showing of their own Attorney-General in Dublin, the ordinary law was dead and superseded in November last, and that a widely spread and powerful conspiracy then existed, too strong for the Executive to cope with, in presence of which life and property were insecure, and men's existence rendered so miserable that death was preferable. If it is right, as Conservatives, from the time of Sir Robert Peel in 1833 downwards, as well as Liberals admit, that the constitution should only be suspended in case of extreme necessity, there is at least the correlative duty that such extreme necessity, when it arises, should not be ignored, and life and property needlessly imperilled. Moreover, Ireland has not been governed by the ordinary law for nearly ten years; and practically that which is ordinary law in England had ceased to be ordinary law in Ireland. To revert to a bygone and almost obsolete system, never in vogue since Mr Gladstone's Irish legislation of 1869-70, was a mere experiment, undertaken against the unanimous advice of all experienced and responsible officials. In presence of a powerful League, the Government had wantonly and capriciously reduced the powers

of the Executive. They did so from obvious motives of party convenience; and it was their bounden duty to resume them the moment the experiment had been shown to fail. There is not a single day since the end of last session when that experiment is even alleged not to have failed. It was a lamentable and continuous failure. It was speedily followed by what the Queen's Speech admits to have been an alarming and unprecedented state of things, and still the Executive elected to go on with less powers than it had possessed since 1870. The evidence of its inability to deal with the situation was glaring and daily increasing, till, in November, the Executive, the judges, and the whole civilised world, wherever newspapers penetrate, were agreed that the Queen's authority was at an end in several districts, and the government of the Land League completely established. Leading Radicals complained that to persist in restraining the Executive under such circumstances, in deference to the plea of guarding freedom, was an idle superstition. Ministers, however, made no sign, except that at Birmingham they talked "pure League," openly sympathised with the insurgents, and one of them later on wrote with glee of the landlords running for their lives.

All that Lord Granville attempted to state in vindication of their procedure was, that the Government had shown "some patience" in trying the ordinary legal remedies before going to extremes. No one disputes it. All that we say is, that after a case of extreme necessity is once made out, patience ceases to be a virtue, and becomes criminal negligence; and that such extreme necessity was completely established, by the Attorney-Gen-

eral's statement, as having existed in November last. Mr Forster's circular a little later on, raking up from the musty records of the past whatever dormant powers he could find, was a confession that the Irish Executive were at their wits' end, but were prevented against their will from obtaining additional authority.

It is to Mr Gladstone's speech that every politician of the present, and every historian of the future, will turn for explanation of a state of things which has struck every observer in every portion of the civilised world with astonishment and horror. He had the advantage of replying to a most vigorous and forcible speech of Sir Stafford Northcote, perhaps the very best which the leader of the Conservative party in the Commons has ever made. Such an invective must have been an additional stimulus to self-vindication. What was that vindication? "If we are told," said he, "that what we are doing now we ought to have done sooner, I think we have a right to ask what we ought to have done and when we ought to have done it." He did not renew the Peace Preservation Act because of the "long, angry, and embittered controversy" which it would have occasioned with his own followers, not because the state of Ireland did not require it. Then, again, he asked, without answering the question, "Were we right or not when we determined to try the effect of the existing law in the first place?" The charge which he had to meet was that he continued to try its effect for months after he knew that it was superseded. So away he branched off again to refer to the late Government's prosecution of four men who were not the leaders of the Land League, forgetting that those leaders had not then

talked sedition, and that the prosecution having been taken in time, had had a wholesome deterrent effect till his own Administration came into power. Then he proceeded to his own prosecution, which every one knows to be a perfect farce, important only for the political admissions made in the Attorney-General's speech. "Outrage rapidly increased in November, and this showed us that we could have nothing to expect in that direction by the institution of those proceedings." Exactly. Then why was not Parliament summoned in November? First, because greater Executive exertion had been made on this than on any other occasion, but fruitlessly, as all admit. Then he proceeded to the easy task of justifying his demand for increased powers. Harking back to the "supposed inaction" of the Government, he declared that it was not the first time that Ireland had been disturbed, or that violence had prevailed. "The amount of violence that actually prevails does not constitute the hinge on which the case turns." But what is that hinge? Again he evaded the subject, and fell back upon the statement which may be taken for granted, that it is not the practice on the *first* appearance of lawlessness to conclude that the case is hopeless. It is admitted that the case was hopeless in November, and again we ransack the speech for an excuse for inaction. The next suggestion is, that all that the Government can do is "to make their appeal to Parliament. Do you think the duty of the Government is perfectly fulfilled unless they carefully and maturely consider not merely the evidence before them, but the state of mind in which they have to meet Parliament?" They must have a case which will carry widespread

conviction of necessity to Parliament and the people, and moral unanimity in support of their proposals. Granted: but that case existed, on their own showing, in November last. And there is not a suggestion of a defence beyond that which is contained in this inapplicable platitude. Time after time throughout his speech, Mr Gladstone stated clearly the question which he had to answer, and time after time evaded a reply, branching off in some other direction, and to some other portion of his subject.

This, moreover, was in answer to an explicit charge of criminal negligence, brought against him formally and officially by the leader of the Opposition, whose known moderation of language renders the charge all the more weighty in his mouth. He challenged the Government why, in reference to a conspiracy which is conducted openly, publicly, and in the face of day, "they abstained from action when action would be effective, when these affairs were just beginning, and put it off to a time when things were very far gone;" why, in other words, they allowed the conflagration to spread beyond control. The answer which he received consisted of a mere suggestion, without a shred of evidence or probability in its favour, that parliamentary support and moral unanimity were obtainable in January and not in November. It practically admits the charge of negligence, and assumes that Parliament and the public are responsible, because of their alleged unwillingness to increase at that time the powers of the Government.

Lord Hartington, too, was wholly unable to find an excuse for this criminal negligence. He gave the lame reason that whilst there were ten agrarian murders in 1879, there

were only seven in 1880. But as for the failure to renew the Peace Preservation Act, and the delay in summoning Parliament, he boldly said, "I will not go at length into these charges. Whether too late or not, the time has come when some measures for the preservation of order are required." He added that he believed that time had not been lost, but he immediately passed on to demonstrate that the number of outrages last year were in all 2573; that previously to that year the largest number of agrarian outrages that had occurred since 1844 was in 1845, when a total of 1920 was reached; and that not only was the number absolutely greater in 1880, but that it was also relatively greater in proportion to the population. Then as regards the growth of agrarian crime during the year, the figures which he brought forward are strongly condemnatory of the Government. The lowest number was in the month of April—viz., 67, which may fairly be urged in extenuation of the Government decision in May with regard to the Peace Preservation Act. But in September, at the beginning of which month Parliament rose, the number had risen to 167, and then started forward by leaps and bounds to 264 in October, 554 in November, and 866 in December,—the latter number being, as the 'Times' pointed out, more than are recorded for the whole of 1879, and little less than the aggregate of those recorded in the three years preceding. And Lord Hartington further showed that this increase in crime was contemporaneous with a marked reduction in the number of evictions, as we know it also to have been with a considerable diminution in agricultural distress. "We shall all admit," said Lord Hartington,

"that there is a great and wide distinction between crime, which is the result, however much to be regretted, but perhaps the natural result, of resistance to unjust and oppressive laws which are pressing at the moment hardly and oppressively upon the people—between crime committed in actual resistance to the law by a people smarting under its operation, and a crime which is deliberately committed for the purpose of bringing about a change in the law." There is nothing in Lord Hartington's speech, or indeed in Mr Gladstone's, which is inconsistent with the belief in both their minds that it would have been wise to resort to repressive measures in November last. On the other hand, there is much to betray the belief in both their minds that, from a party point of view, having regard to the past pledges of their followers, and the probability of a division in their ranks, it would have been rash to summon Parliament in November, and still more so to renew the Act of 1875 in May. Ireland must pay the cost, and England suffer the discredit. The cost and the discredit are serious, and may prove to be yet more calamitous. Meanwhile the only excuse yet offered by the Ministry is, that while Parliament eagerly responds in January, it would have been deaf in November, to an appeal thus urged in Lord Hartington's words: "For the law of the land has been substituted the law of the Land League; for the judge and the magistrate, an irresponsible committee; for the police constable and the sheriff's officer—for those who work in the service of the law in the full light of day—the midnight assassin and the ruffian who invades the humble cottage disguised by midnight. From this

tyranny there are thousands suffering at this moment; and it is for them—not for the landlord classes alone, but for hundreds of thousands who desire to gain honestly their living, but cannot do so except in fear of their lives—that we ask you to give us, not a permanent but a temporary abridgment of some of the forms of the constitution.” It is well that a man with the prestige of a Liberal statesman comes forward to urge this solemn appeal; but for ourselves, we should hardly have liked to call the Habeas Corpus Act a *form* of the constitution. This appeal was quite as applicable in November last as it is in January, and a heavy responsibility rests upon the statesmen who deliberately, on their own reasoning, failed in their duty.

After six nights and one Wednesday of debate, on the ninth morning from the meeting of Parliament for the transaction of most urgent and long-delayed business, the House was allowed, by the grace and favour of Mr Parnell, to divide, and the protracted wrangle on the Address was brought to a close, so far at least as Mr Parnell’s amendment was concerned. The most noticeable feature of the whole debate was the sustained silence of Mr Bright, Mr Chamberlain, and Sir William Harcourt—the three Ministers who are chiefly credited with responsibility for past inaction, with disapproval of the policy which has at the thirteenth hour been announced. It is from those men, and not from Lord Hartington, that we should have heard the real reasons why a disastrous inaction was persisted in, whilst Ireland and the Irish people were groaning under the intolerable tyranny inflicted by the “miscreants”—and ticket-of-leave con-

viets—referred to in the debate. In proportion as the three inculpated statesmen succeeded in vindicating their policy of acquiescence in admitted tyranny, terrorism, and outrage, they would have strengthened the opposition to protective legislation now. The Ministry has two faces,—one to present to Birmingham in the recess, whilst arms are being sold and exported to Ireland; another to the House of Commons after Parliament has met. Those members of the Cabinet who, like the new Under-Secretary for the Home Department, regarded the scruples of their new Radical colleagues as too superstitious, must not merely abandon the attempt to excuse the past, but they must necessarily, if the Government is to maintain a show of consistency in debate, impose silence upon those to whom during the recess they unfortunately succumbed. The result is what we see. A determined and lawless conspiracy has had a clear aim before it, and has displayed ruthless resolution in executing its purposes. That conspiracy has been met by a divided Cabinet and by an Executive shorn of the powers to which it had become accustomed for years, and utterly unable to act with effect. Denunciations of its guilt and crime were useless whilst Cabinet Ministers too openly betrayed their sympathy with its purposes, and their indignation at the wrongs which it pretended to redress. Parliament meets, and the case is hardly improved. The leaders of that conspiracy, the very men who are undergoing their trial, are present in effective force. With powers of exposition, expostulation, invective, and argument, which are illimitable, and with a complete mastery over the forms and procedure of the House, they have elevated obstruc-

tion to the dignity of a science, and wield it with the same pertinacity and success as in Ireland they wield the terrors of the League. What is to be the upshot of it all? The functions of the House of Commons are paralysed, and the authority necessary to restrain the League, and recover to the sovereignty of the British Crown the districts which it has lost, is dammed up at its source. To all intents and purposes a civil war is being waged in Ireland, without its being declared; and the result is, that whilst one side fights with rifles and lethal weapons, the other conducts the defence with writs which cannot be executed, with prosecutions which are a solemn farce, with Bills which cannot be brought in for weeks, and which are doomed to disappear for more weeks under an ocean of interminable talk. No one can pretend to foresee what this extraordinary complication has in store. The result in Ireland is to prolong that intolerable tyranny which all admit and condemn, to increase the misery of the people, and to give to the conspirators all the encouragement which comes of long impunity, signal success, and a prolonged triumph over the Executive and Parliament. No league or conspiracy ever need despair. There is sure to be some turn in the wheel of fortune, during which the bitter rivalry of party may create for it a success which it could not have achieved. The history of the last nine months is a terrible commentary on the levity and recklessness with which the electors decided the issue presented to them at the last election. The Ministers who have created the situation must solve the difficulties which they have called into existence. No one envies them their task. And not the least of their humilia-

tions will be that, in order to complete it, they must rely upon the aid and steady support against their own supporters, and in the teeth of their own pledges, of those whom in office they so pertinaciously traduced, whose difficulties they did everything to augment, and whose successes they derided and maligned.

It is most certainly a time in which party spirit must be laid aside, and the extremity of public disorder faced by a steady resolve to support the Ministry, in its present or reconstructed form, so long as it devotes its energies to extinguishing the conflagration which its policy has spread. Deeply as we may lament the want of forethought, the impolitic measures, the wild licence of language which has let loose in Ireland the spirit of confusion, its authors are in the existing Parliament the only possible Ministers. It would be an aggravation, if that were possible, of existing evils, if any outburst of legitimate party feeling at home were to increase the difficulties and weaken the force of the Administration. So far as we can judge from the language of Lord Hartington, and even of Mr Gladstone, the resolution of Government has been taken to arm the Executive with powers adequate to the occasion; and, contrary to the expressed views of some of their number and some of their followers, to insist that coercion shall precede remedial legislation. To aid the execution of this wise but tardy resolution is the true duty of the Opposition. Parliament must show itself equal to the emergency, and supersede the halting criminal indecision of the recess by a firm and comprehensive policy. It must put down obstruction, or decline in authority. The whole country has witnessed, with grief and indigna-

tion, the waste of weeks over the debate upon the Address. But it must not be forgotten that obstruction in Parliament is, quite as much as terrorism and repression in Ireland, the policy to which the Home Rulers and Land Leaguers are publicly committed. One of the worst consequences of allowing this great conspiracy to spread, and to obtain and wield a power so considerable as that which now confronts the Government of the Queen, is that its leaders are forced to go on from one extreme to another. They cannot meet the catastrophe of an ignominious failure. It would be intolerable to find themselves quietly placed on one side by an Executive resuming, with the aid of extended powers, its rightful position as the guardian of law and order. They are desperate men, bound to those whom they have deluded, urged on by those immediately behind them to do something to vindicate the exaggerated pretensions of the recess. The passing of a Coercion Bill will relegate most of them to their natural obscurity, and those who are released from their tyranny will be the first to requite the past. Already their rhetorical flourishes comprise an "axe awaiting them in the lobby;" and no doubt a dismissal to the Tower or a conviction at any State trial of decent solemnity and importance would be welcome to most of them as an honourable exit from an untenable position. But meanwhile, and until Parliament shows itself free of their intolerable incubus, every motive which can urge men to rid themselves of the imputations of treachery, cowardice, and falsehood compels them to persist, in the first instance, in every known method of obstructing the course of legislation, and paralysing the functions of the only authority

which is stronger than they. The studied moderation of Mr Parnell, so long as he still hoped for a considerable Radical vote in his favour, was exchanged for one of menace and uncompromising self-assertion the moment he discovered from the division taken upon his amendment that he had obtained no effective Parliamentary support upon which he could confidently reckon, and was therefore marching slowly but surely to ultimate overthrow. To the very last he must maintain defiance, and therefore it is useless to postpone the measures necessary to put down obstruction in the idle hope of conciliation, or indeed one moment longer than is necessary to demonstrate a patient tolerance of all reasonable or possible rights of a minority. If Mr Parnell was inclined to yield, the knowledge that Mr Davitt, the founder, and probably the real leader of the League, is behind him, would prevent him. There is no retreat possible to those who have embarked upon the criminal desperate ventures of these men, and it is intolerable that Ministers, and those who call themselves statesmen, should have played with and encouraged them. Mr Davitt is a released convict, and he has declined to add to his numerous and respectable qualifications for a seat in the House of Commons, that of taking the oath of allegiance to the Queen. But he has couched his demands in language which must surely open the eyes of even the member for Birmingham to the degree of sedition which they, as Ministers of the Crown, have countenanced for months.

"Neither coercion nor flying columns," he declares, "can save landlordism from destruction, or stand between our country and freedom. Let every unconstitutional act on the

part of the Government, and every outrage perpetrated by the landlords, be so many arguments given to the world as proof that Englishmen cannot govern us as they rule themselves, and that the class which has done their dirty work in Ireland in the past, has forfeited every claim to further toleration from the Irish people. Despite the efforts that are being made to drive you from your stern, passive attitude into loose and violent action, remain steadfast to the programme of the League, and repel every incentive to outrage, and every inducement to give your enemies the opportunity of wiping out this movement in the blood of Irishmen. Let the public opinion of the civilised world now focussed upon our country see that it is the Government, and not the Land League, which commits outrage upon justice and popular rights, and the landlords, not the people, who blacken the character of our country, and violate principles of equity and morality. Then if your patience becomes exhausted by Government brutality, and if every right, privilege, and hope, which is your God-given inheritance, be trampled upon by vindictive power, the world will hold England, and not you, responsible, if the wolf-dog of Irish vengeance bounds over the Atlantic at the very heart of that Power from which it is now held back by the influence of the League."

And the programme, in favour of which this menacing language is

held, is contained in the short formula—"The land, the whole land, and nothing but the land, will ever satisfy the Irish people, or bring peace to our distracted country."

We do not suppose that the power and the designs of the League are in any proportion to the violence of their language. But it is high time that a stop should be put both to their language and their acts. The tactics of the obstructionists must also be brought to a close. The Opposition must help the Ministers, not merely against its own members and its own supporters, but against an Irish contingent which comes armed with the cast-off arguments and forgotten pledges of the very statesmen who can no longer evade the paramount duty of controlling the spirit of lawlessness which they have themselves created. It is to Parliament that the people of this country must look,—acting, it may be, through a divided, irresolute, and deeply incriminated Cabinet,—to vindicate at last the cause of order, and rescue Ireland and the Irish people from a calamity as bad as pestilence,—famine in which they have been gradually engulfed, without a finger being stirred to aid them.

GEORGE ELIOT.

Born November 22, 1820 ; Died December 22, 1880.

THE last sheets of the January Magazine had just passed through the press when we were informed of the death of the great and gifted author whose name stands at the head of this notice. The loss of George Eliot in the full tide of her fame and the ripe maturity of her brilliant genius, calls for something more in these pages than an echo of the unanimous expression of sorrow which her unexpected death has drawn from the press. It is now nearly a quarter of a century since George Eliot came forward, an unknown and diffident writer, to strive for literary distinction in our columns, and the relationship which then commenced ripened into a mutual regard, to which she gave an affecting expression in one of the last letters written by her before her fatal illness. George Eliot has not long survived the Editor, whose proudest literary success was the recognition and promotion of her genius, and whose death she mourned with deep and unaffected regret. From the time that she committed the little anonymous tale of "Amos Barton" to his care, down to the days when 'Theophrastus Such' was passing through the press, she never ceased to acknowledge and take advantage of his ready counsels and frank criticisms; and the recollections of past friendship and personal relations, even more than the public esteem due to her as the greatest novelist of our age, make us anxious to offer an affectionate tribute to her memory.

To sketch the life of George Eliot, except in so far as it is connected with her work, does not enter into the object of this memorial. The remembrance of her private life, her lofty nature, her self-sacrificing disposition, and rare affection, is a precious legacy to the loving circle of friends by whom she was surrounded which we would not willingly impair by dwelling upon. It was as George Eliot that she appeared before the public, and it is as George Eliot that we wish to regard her in this notice, believing that such a mode of commemorating her is the one that would have been most congenial to her own feelings. Happily we have in her works, and in our private correspondence relating to them, all that is requisite for constructing a brief history of her genius. From these we can form a fairly accurate idea of how the genius of George Eliot was moulded, and whence she drew the materials for her marvellous creations of character.

In 'Daniel Deronda' George Eliot writes thus:—

"A human life, I think, should be well rooted in some spot of a native land, where it may get the love of tender kinship for the face of earth, for the labours men go forth to, for the sounds and accents that haunt it, for whatever will give that early home a familiar unmistakable difference amidst the future widening of knowledge; a spot where the definiteness of early memories may be inwrought with affection, and kindly acquaintance with all neighbours, even to the dogs and donkeys, may spread not by sentimental effort and reflection but as a sweet habit of the blood."

It was this tender love of kinship with the face of the earth, "and acquaintance with all neighbours, even to the dogs and donkeys," that first leavened George Eliot's mind, and taught her what poetry and romance lie embedded in our commonest surroundings. Not the depth of her self-acquired culture—not even her subsequent association with persons of the highest intellect and experience of the world—did for her what her country nurture in the Midlands had done. In Maggie of Dorlcote Mill, we find revealed many of the feelings and stages of thought and temperament through which George Eliot herself must undoubtedly have passed. The imaginative girl, seeking for a more refined sympathy than that which she found around her; disposed to quarrel with surface conventionalities; full of love to all, but too sensitive to show it; happy in her own world, but still striving after a more ideal life, of which she gets fitful glimpses through the few books that come to her hand;—Maggie Tulliver must surely have been of kindred blood to the girl that was to be one day George Eliot. Only an intense love for the face of the country—for the work-a-day people, and for the leisurely life that was going on about her—could have printed the pictures of it so deeply in her imagination. We are most conscious of her strength, most sensible that her feelings are stirred, when she is drawing for our delight from the storehouse of her fresh young impressions. When she leaves the English Midlands and its folk, we may still be impressed by her genius; but we are conscious of an admixture of art, which we never detect so long as she is within her own special province. Of her early ability we can judge for ourselves by observing how she could take hold of the minutest details of country life, even in matters that lie beyond the usual ken of girls and women. When the 'Scenes of Clerical Life' appeared, excellent critics maintained that only a clergyman could have written the book; while to our knowledge a practical cabinetmaker who had got an early copy of 'Adam Bede,' felt certain that it could be the work only of one who had been bred as a carpenter. In the sonnets entitled "Brother and Sister" we have a more direct reminiscence of these early days. The hours of her childish rambles with her brother, she tells us,

"Were seed to all my after good.
My infant gladness, through eye, ear, and touch,
Took easily as warmth a various food
To nourish the sweet skill of loving much.

Long years have left their writing on my brow;
But yet the freshness and the dew-fed beam
Of those young mornings are about me now
When we two wandered toward the far-off stream."

It was well that a great genius arose to save for us pictures of a state of society that has now passed away. The Midlands in George Eliot's childhood still retained the quiet, old-fashioned, easy-going life of the last century. Railroads were unknown; newspapers had not reached the masses; politics commanded little general interest; the affairs of each small community were to itself all in all; and people cared little what went on in the next county, and still less what was happening in other countries. Such spirit of inquiry as was abroad found expression in re-

ligious dissent, which was then sufficiently uncommon to scandalise the well-to-do among the people, and sometimes to attract persecution, as in the case of poor Mr Tryan. If the people grumbled, it was at something that directly affected their own interests—such as tithes or taxes; and they cared little for the improvement of their political position. Squires were squires in those days, and rectors were rectors—great local magnates whose personal dispositions were everything to the people with whom they came in contact, and whose rights and privileges, however arbitrarily they might be exercised, were not to be called in question. Steam factories and machinery had not yet tended to extinguish individuality among the working classes, and a clever handicraftsman was a person of general consideration. The inn landlord and the parish clerk were people of social standing, and the mail-coachman a great public character. Education was confined to the few, and general knowledge was far from being either accurate or extensive. From the height of our own enlightenment, we are apt to look back with a species of contempt upon so primitive a state of society; and yet it was its quaintness and simplicity that fascinated George Eliot's mind and gave a colour to her genius. It is noteworthy that in 'Adam Bede' and in the 'Mill on the Floss,' where she is dealing with the older condition of the country, she is much more successful than in 'Felix Holt,' which belongs to the era of the Reform upheaval; and this would almost justify us in believing that she had seen less that was beautiful and lovable in the latter than in the former stage, though her sympathies were unmistakably with the newer epoch. The reality of her convictions never altogether gets the better of her sentimental liking for the England of her own early life; and she presents the singular case of one who is at once an advanced advocate of progress and an enthusiastic *laudator temporis acti*. "Mine," she playfully says, "I fear, is not a well-regulated mind: it has an occasional tenderness for old abuses; it lingers with a certain fondness over the days of nasal clerks and top-booted parsons, and has a sigh for the departed shades of vulgar errors." In the introduction of 'Felix Holt,' in the exquisite description of a stage-coach journey in the days before railways, the same key-note is struck. And who can forget the beautiful lament over the death of "Fine Old Leisure," who "read only one newspaper, innocent of leaders, and was free from that periodicity of sensations which we call post-time? He was a contemplative, rather stout gentleman, of excellent digestion—of quiet perceptions, undiseased by hypothesis: happy in his inability to know the causes of things, preferring the things themselves." There was much quiet humour and sometimes a good deal of easy banter mixed in her records of old country recollections; but we cannot mistake the kindly and genial associations which in her after-life were mingled with the retrospect of the society in which her youth was passed.

It would be a nice point to determine the exact degree in which George Eliot's genius was influenced by the scholarship and culture of her after-life. No amount of metaphysical study or scientific research could have led to the creation of Mrs Poyser. The majority of the most powerful characters in her earlier novels had been seen and grasped by her before leaving Nuneaton; and the strict lines of study which she delighted to follow are, justly or not, believed to fetter rather than expand the imagination. It has often been objected

that her fondness for scientific illustration was a blemish on the style of her novels; and though we do not share this view, we like her most when she is most natural. Yet the culture and scholarship which she possessed in a greater degree than usually falls to the lot of her sex, and of most writers of fiction, make themselves manifest all through her writings, and form a fitting complement of the great gifts with which nature had endowed her.

It would also be interesting, were it possible, to trace the revolution which George Eliot's views of religion and social ethics underwent between the time of her departure from Nuneaton and her arrival in London to take up a literary career. On this point we turn in vain to her novels for enlightenment, and we respect the feelings which restrained her from laying before the public any indications of her own mental struggles. The young woman who could sketch with precision the various shades of doctrine in the Church, who could define with nicety the theological positions of Tryan and Dinah Morris, must have thought much, and deeply, about the various phases of religion that were to be met with in her neighbourhood. Be that as it may, we find in her novels the highest ideals of Christian life and character, and the purest exposition of Christian ethics. Some portion of the Bible was daily read by her; and Thomas à Kempis on the "Imitation of Christ" continued always to be one of her favourite books. Her first literary undertakings were the translation of Strauss's 'Leben Jesu' and Feuerbach's 'Essence of Christianity,' and her labour on these volumes showed even then the same fidelity and thoroughness which characterised her later works. It was in keeping with the judgment which directed every step of George Eliot's literary career, that she never sought to connect these books or her contributions to the 'Westminster Review' with the great name by which the world knew her.

After a short residence on the Continent, whither she had been taken by some of her kind country friends, George Eliot commenced literary work in London in 1851. At this time her strength of intellect, her scholarship and varied accomplishments, and the personal charm of her manner and conversation, made a deep impression on all who were thrown into her society. She contributed several papers to the 'Westminster Review,' which were chiefly notable for their careful workmanship, and the extent and variety of the reading visible in them. About this period George Eliot's acquaintances would probably have predicted for her a great career as a philosopher or a social essayist; but the bent of her special genius was apparent only to one of her friends, through whose counsels and agency she was soon to turn it to a practical account.

It was in the autumn of 1856 that the late Mr George Henry Lewes, who himself was a contributor to 'Maga,' sent to the Editor, the late Mr John Blackwood, "The Sad Fortunes of Amos Barton" as the work of an anonymous friend. The story was offered as the first instalment of a series; and though the Editor pronounced that "Amos" would "do," he wished to satisfy himself that it was no chance hit, and requested a sight of the other tales before coming to a decision. Criticisms on the plot and studies of character in "Amos Barton" were frankly put forward, and the Editor wound up his letter by saying,—“If the author is a new writer, I beg to congratulate him on being worthy of the honours

of print and pay. I shall be very glad to hear from him or you soon." At this time the remaining 'Scenes of Clerical Life' were unwritten, and the criticisms upon "Amos" had rather a disheartening effect upon the author, which the Editor hastened to remove as soon as he became sensible of them, by offering to accept the tale. He wrote to Mr Lewes, "If you think it would stimulate the author to go on with the other tales, I shall publish 'Amos' at once;" expressing also his "sanguineness" that he would be able to approve of the contributions to follow, as "Amos" gave indications of great freshness of style. Some natural curiosity had been expressed as to the unknown writer, and a hint had been thrown out that he was "a clergyman,"—a device which, since it has the great sanction of Sir Walter Scott, we must regard as perfectly consistent with the ethics of anonymous literature.

"Amos Barton" occupied the first place in the Magazine for January 1857, and was completed in the following number. By that time "Mr Gilfil's Love-Story" was ready, and the 'Scenes of Clerical Life' appeared month by month until they ended with "Janet's Repentance" in November of that year. As fresh instalments of the manuscript were received, the Editor's conviction of the power, and even genius, of his new contributor, steadily increased. In his first letter to the author after the appearance of "Amos Barton," he wrote,—“It is a long time since I have read anything so fresh, so humorous, and so touching. The style is capital, conveying so much in so few words.” In another letter, addressed "My dear Amos," for lack of any more distinct appellation, the Editor remarks,—“I forgot whether I told you or Lewes that I had shown part of the MS. to Thackeray. He was staying with me, and having been out at dinner, came in about eleven o'clock, when I had just finished reading it. I said to him, 'Do you know that I think I have lighted upon a new author who is uncommonly like a first-class passenger.' I showed him a page or two—I think the passage where the curate returns home and Milly is first introduced. He would not pronounce whether it came up to my ideas, but remarked afterwards that he would have liked to have read more, which I thought a good sign.”

From the first the 'Scenes of Clerical Life' arrested public attention. Critics were, however, by no means unanimous as to their merits. They had so much individuality—stood so far apart from the standards of contemporary fiction—that there was considerable difficulty in applying the usual tests in their case. The terse condensed style, the exactitude of expression, and the constant use of illustration, naturally suggested to some the notion that the new writer must be a man of science relaxing himself in the walks of fiction. The Editor's own suspicions had once been directed towards Professor Owen by a 'similarity of handwriting.' Guesses were freely hazarded as to the author's personality, and among other conjectures was one that Lord Lytton, whose "Caxton" novels were about the same period delighting the readers of this Magazine, had again struck a new vein of fiction. Probably Dickens was among the first to divine that the author must be a woman; but the reasons upon which he based this opinion might readily have been met by equally cogent deductions from the 'Scenes' that the writer must be of the male sex. Dickens, on the conclusion of the 'Scenes,' wrote a

letter of most generous appreciation, which, when sent through the Editor, afforded the unknown author very hearty gratification.

While "Mr Gilfil's Love-Story" was passing through the Magazine, the Editor was informed that he was to know the author as "George Eliot." It was at this time, then, that a name so famous in our literature was invented. We have no reason to suppose that it had been thought of when the series was commenced. It was probably assumed from the impossibility of a nameless shadow maintaining frequent communication with the editor of a magazine; possibly the recollection of George Sand entered into the idea; but the designation was euphonious and impressive.

Before the conclusion of the 'Scenes' Mr Blackwood felt satisfied that he had to do with a master-mind, and that a great career as a novelist lay open to George Eliot; and his frequent communications urge her warmly to persevere in her efforts. When "Janet's Repentance" was drawing to a close, and arrangements were being made for re-issuing the sketches as a separate publication, he wrote to Mr Lewes: "George Eliot is too diffident of his own powers and prospects of success. Very few men, indeed, have more reason to be satisfied as far as the experiment has gone. The following should be a practical cheerer,"—and then he proceeded to say how the Messrs Blackwood had seen reason to make a large increase in the forthcoming reprint of the 'Scenes.' The volumes did not appear until after the New Year of 1858; and their success was such that the Editor was able, before the end of the month, to write as follows to Lewes: "George Eliot has fairly achieved a literary reputation among judges, and the public must follow, although it may take time. Dickens's letter was very handsome, and truly kind. I sent him an extract from George Eliot's letter to me, and I have a note from him saying that he has 'been much interested by it,' and that 'it has given him the greatest pleasure.' Dickens adheres to his theory that the writer must be a woman." To George Eliot herself he wrote in February 1858: "You will recollect, when we proposed to reprint, my impression was that the series had not lasted long enough in the Magazine to give you a hold on the general public, although long enough to make your literary reputation. Unless in exceptional cases, a very long time often elapses between the two stages of reputation—the literary and the public. Your progress will be *sure* if not so quick as we could wish."

It is interesting now to look back and recall the impression then made by the 'Scenes of Clerical Life' upon the higher order of readers, and the extent to which they foreshadowed the recognition of George Eliot's power and genius. Though only sketches, they bore the stamp of an author who was not only a finished master of English style, but a creator of no ordinary originality and mental grasp. Readers found that they were made to interest themselves in the conflict between the higher qualities of human nature and their antitheses, instead of the play of passion and affection—in problems of humanity instead of combinations of character. Real men and women were discovered in her pages, with their inner feelings as carefully delineated as their outside conduct was accurately described: no attempt made at picturesque extenuation of their failings or colouring of their virtues. Their destinies were regulated, not by the pleasing Providence

of the ordinary novelist, who assigns to each of his characters the reward or punishment which he thinks will be most satisfactory to his readers, but in accordance with the laws which influence action and control destinies. There was little interest attaching purely to plot in the 'Scenes,' and yet this want was not felt as a defect. The evolution of feeling, quite as much as the working out of the results of action, sustained the reader's attention. But the chief manifestation of the vigour and freshness of her genius, was the power which she showed in recommending to sympathy characters who, of themselves, had but a limited stock of lovable qualities. Amos Barton, from an outside point of view, is not a likeable man. He is vulgar; his spelling even is deficient; he is narrow-minded; he inculcates virtue upon Master Fodge by means of unpleasant sentiments; he was at best but "superlatively middling, the quintessential extract of mediocrity;" yet there were few characters in the fiction of the day that took a greater hold upon the heart, or into whose sorrows readers could so cordially enter. Nor is Mr Tryan the stamp of clergyman that is generally popular with the novel-reader: although he is in many respects less removed from a hero than poor Amos, it was difficult to think that his religious views were altogether healthy; and he himself confesses that he adopted them when illness had made "all dissipation distasteful to him." People were naturally inclined to think that old Mr Crewe, who, "in a brown Brutus wig, delivered inaudible sermons on a Sunday," was to be commiserated in having such a firebrand as the Chapel of Ease minister pitted against him in the parish. Yet the character of Tryan is so wrought out, that the feelings of George Eliot's readers were ever involuntarily ranging themselves on his side, and recognising, in his earnestness of purpose and victory over self, qualities that made even his failings look like minor virtues.

'Adam Bede' was begun almost as soon as the 'Scenes' were finished, and had already made considerable progress before their appearance in the reprint. In February 1858, the Editor, writing to Mr Lewes, says: "I am delighted to hear from George Eliot that I might soon hope to see something like a volume of the new tale. I am very sanguine." In a few weeks after, the manuscript of the opening chapters of 'Adam Bede' was put into his hands, and he writes thus to Lewes, after the first perusal: "Tell George Eliot that I think 'Adam Bede' all right—most life-like and real. I shall read the MS. quietly over again before writing in detail about it. . . . For the first reading it did not signify how many things I had to think of; I would have hurried through it with eager pleasure. I write this note to allay all anxiety on the part of George Eliot as to my appreciation of the merits of this most promising opening of a picture of life. In spite of all injunctions, I began 'Adam Bede' in the railway, and felt very savage when the waning light stopped me as we neared the Scottish border." A few weeks later, when he had received further chapters, and had reperused the manuscript from the beginning, Mr Blackwood wrote to George Eliot: "The story is altogether very novel, and I cannot recollect anything at all like it. I find myself constantly thinking of the characters as real personages, which is a capital sign." After he had read yet a little further he remarks: "There is an atmosphere of genuine religion and purity

that fears no evil about the whole opening of the story." George Eliot made an expedition to Germany in the spring of 1858, and the bulk of the second volume was sent home from Munich. Acknowledging the receipt of the manuscript, the Editor wrote to Lewes: "There can be no mistake about the merits, and I am not sure whether I expressed myself sufficiently warmly. But you know that I am not equal to the *abandon* of expression which distinguishes the large-hearted school of critics." 'Adam Bede' was completed in the end of October 1858, and Mr Blackwood read the conclusion at once, and sent his opinions. He says: "I am happy to tell you that I think it is capital. I never saw such wonderful efforts worked out by such a succession of simple and yet delicate and minute touches. Hetty's night in the fields is marvellous. I positively shuddered for her, poor creature; and I do not think the most thoughtless lad could read that terrible picture of her feelings and hopeless misery without being deeply moved. Adam going to support her at the trial is a noble touch. You really make him a gentleman by that act. It is like giving him his spurs. The way poor Hetty leans upon and clings to Dinah is beautiful. Mr Irving is always good; so are the Poysers, life-like as possible. Dinah is a very striking and original character, always perfectly supported and never obtrusive in her piety. Very early in the book I took it into my head that it would be 'borne in upon her' to fall in love with Adam. Arthur is the least satisfactory character, but he is true too. The picture of his happy, complacent feelings before the bomb-shell bursts upon him is very good."

'Adam Bede' was published in the last week of January 1859. The author was desirous on this occasion to test her strength by appealing directly to the public; and the Editor, though quite prepared to accept 'Adam Bede' for the Magazine, willingly gratified her. Sending George Eliot an early copy, before 'Adam Bede' had reached the public, he says: "Whatever the subscription may be, I am confident of success—great success. The book is so novel and so true, that the whole story remains in my mind like a succession of incidents in the lives of people I know. 'Adam Bede' can certainly never come under the class of popular agreeable stories; but those who love power, real humour, and true natural description, will stand by the sturdy carpenter and the living groups you have painted in and about Hayslope."

'Adam Bede' did not immediately command that signal success which, looking back to it now, we might have expected for it. As the Editor had warned the author, the 'Scenes' had secured for her a reputation with the higher order of readers and with men of letters, but had not established her popularity with the public in general. The reviewers, too, were somewhat divided. Many of them recognised the merits of the work, but more committed the blunder of endeavouring to fix the position of the book by contrasting the author with the popular novelists of the time, and by endeavouring to determine from which of them she had drawn her inspiration. In 1859 a review of 'Adam Bede' from the pen of one of the oldest and ablest of our contributors was published in this Magazine, and on its appearance George Eliot wrote the Editor—"I should like you to convey my gratitude to your reviewer. I see well he is a man whose experience and study enable him to relish parts of my book which I should despair of seeing recognised by critics

in London back drawing-rooms. He has gratified me keenly by laying his finger on passages which I wrote either from strong feeling or from intimate knowledge, but which I had prepared myself to find entirely passed over by reviewers." Soon after, the 'Times' followed with an appreciative notice of the book which sounded its real merits, and did justice to the author's originality of genius; and by the month of April the book was steadily running through a second edition. Readers were beginning to realise that the 'Scenes of Clerical Life' was not a mere chance success, but the work of a writer capable of greater and better things.

The curiosity of the public was now greatly exercised by the personality of the author, and anxious conjectures about the identity of the mysterious George Eliot were rife. Mr Blackwood, who had at first been eager to make the acquaintance of his new contributor, scrupulously respected the *incognito* as soon as he was informed that George Eliot did not wish it to be penetrated. But the publication of 'Adam Bede' gave rise to an incident which soon necessitated the raising of the veil. The extraordinary fidelity with which many of its characters were painted, was recognised in the neighbourhood of Nuneaton, and produced a firm conviction that the writer must be a native of those parts, or at least one intimately acquainted with the country and people. Suspicions had previously been entertained that some passages of the 'Scenes' had a local application, and characters had been recognised in both "Amos Barton" and "Mr Gilfil." The question was, Who could be the writer? The literary talent about Nuneaton was not so extensive as to require much elimination to get at the answer. The only man who was capable of such work was, according to common consent, a broken-down gentleman of the name of Liggins, who had gone through a fortune at Cambridge, and must therefore be a man of culture and talent. After the first two or three parts of the 'Scenes' had appeared in the Magazine, an Isle of Man paper revealed to the world that Liggins was the author. At first he seems to have repudiated the indictment, but the denial was set down to the natural modesty of a successful man of genius. Whether the honours which 'Adam Bede' was receiving was too much for his resolution, or whether the representations of his friends had worked him into a belief that he was really the author, is not certain; but this much is incontestable, that he allowed a claim to be publicly put forward on his behalf. An officious local clergyman reported Mr Liggins to the 'Times' as the author; and though the real George Eliot met the statement by a challenge to the pretender to settle the question by writing a chapter or two in the style of the 'Scenes' or of 'Adam Bede,' there were not a few firmly persuaded that Liggins was the man. George Eliot's publishers received numerous letters reiterating proofs of Mr Liggins's authorship, while others expressed anxiety to relieve the circumstances of a person of so great genius. Neither George Eliot nor the Messrs Blackwood troubled themselves much about the Liggins and anti-Liggins controversy, except in so far as there was a danger of pecuniary sympathy being misapplied; "for," wrote the Editor to George Eliot, "some years ago a rascal nearly succeeded in marrying a girl with money on the strength of being the author of a series of articles in the Magazine." The Liggins incident, however, redoubled

the curiosity of the public to get at the real authorship; and before the 'Mill on the Floss' appeared, the identity of George Eliot with her real self began to be well known.

While 'Adam Bede' was still in hand, George Eliot's thoughts had turned towards an Italian novel, of which Savonarola was to be one of the prominent characters. The transition of idea from the Methodist Dinah Morris to the medieval Dominican revivalist was not an unnatural one. But it was well, however, for the growth of her literary reputation that she confined herself for a little longer to the familiar walks of English rural life. Great novel as 'Romola' undoubtedly is, it could scarcely have won the triumph of the 'Mill on the Floss,' which, following so closely on 'Adam Bede,' at once secured her position in the first rank of English novelists.

As soon as 'Adam Bede' was finished, George Eliot, with unflagging industry, set to work on a new novel, and had the greater part of the manuscript ready to place in the hands of her publishers by the beginning of 1860. The title originally chosen was 'Sister Maggie,' and the bulk of the work was written under that designation, but after the completion of the novel, doubts were felt as to the distinctiveness of the appellation. The present well-known title was suggested by the Editor. Writing on the 6th January 1860, he says: "We have all been considering the various titles proposed, and this morning it suddenly came across me that the 'Mill on the Floss' would be an appropriate title, and in some respects more appropriate and curiosity-exciting than any of those suggested. It has, too, a sort of poetical sound." The title was at once adopted, and the work appeared in the end of April. From the publication of the 'Mill on the Floss' George Eliot's assured position in fiction may be dated. If 'Adam Bede' revealed masterly insight into character and human nature, coupled with inimitable gifts of description, the 'Mill on the Floss' showed other powers equally great. The original title proves that Maggie Tulliver was intended to be the central figure in the novel; and though she lacks the strength of such creations as Dinah Morris or Romola, or even Dorothea in 'Middlemarch,' she takes as deep a hold upon the imagination as any other character that George Eliot has conceived. It would not be well that the autobiographic interest which must be held to attach to the development of Maggie should in any way overpower our appreciation of her as an ideal, for we know of few pictures of English girlhood more elevating and lovable. It was only natural that the mental disclosures in the 'Mill on the Floss' should recall as a parallel Goethe's 'Confessions of a Beautiful Soul;' but it would not be going beyond the bounds of justice to apply that collective title to the whole of George Eliot's literary remains.

'Silas Marner, the Weaver of Raveloe' followed the year after the publication of the 'Mill on the Floss.' The idea of the Italian romance was now taking form, and the less ambitious sketch of 'Silas,' as compared with its two predecessors, was probably due to the eagerness with which George Eliot was looking forward to the commencement of her romance of old Florentine life. She had been drawn into this work solely by the character of Savonarola, by his easily recognised affinity with her own character, and perhaps by the wonderful personal resem-

blance between herself and the great Dominican which has often been the subject of remark. But as not unfrequently happens, even in the case of the greatest geniuses, the ideal which had guided her mind scarcely stood the test when put to the proof. Fra Girolamo certainly stands out in the pages of 'Romola' with all the vigour and fidelity of history; but he fails to make the same impression as the humble Methodist preacher, Dinah Morris. Although we think George Eliot is always at her best when depicting English life and character, 'Romola' illustrates a very important side of her literary workmanship. It showed her to be possessed of the power of drawing from study and meditation characters as true to nature and to their times, and a society as life-like and faithful to history, as those which she had previously delineated from personal observation and experience. Without a vestige of mere antiquarianism, 'Romola' was a perfect revival of the Florence of the fifteenth century in the England of the nineteenth; and even Scott never succeeded in projecting the past into the present with more fidelity and less of anachronism.

It is not necessary that we should dwell with the same minuteness upon the latter part of George Eliot's literary career, as we have employed in speaking of the less-known circumstances under which she achieved her fame, and made for herself a name familiar in the mouth of every reader. She had fairly won the confidence of the public by the 'Mill on the Floss' and its predecessors; and each subsequent work as it appeared was cheerfully admitted, apart from its special character, to have a claim upon the attention of readers and thinkers. This popular trust in her works made a deep impression upon George Eliot's mind, and the loving gratitude with which she repaid it formed a very fine trait in her character. Even in the ripest consciousness of her powers, she never ceased to feel anxiety as to the reception her works might meet with, and she never suffered any subject to pass from her pen until she was satisfied that no more could be done to make it perfect. The strong temptations offered to a popular author to multiply books had no weight with George Eliot, and to this restraint is due in no small measure the value of what she achieved. Three years elapsed between 'Romola' and 'Felix Holt'; five years between the latter and 'Middlemarch'; and other five years between 'Middlemarch' and 'Daniel Deronda.' As interludes in her more serious work, we have the poetical romance of the 'Spanish Gypsy,' and other poems of greater or less length, coming between her last three novels.

It is through the novels that the main current of her literary life and thought must be traced; and it may be claimed for each successive fiction, that it illustrated some new and striking aspect of her many-sided genius. In strong contrast with the still life of her first novels, came the picture in 'Felix Holt' of the working of new political ideas among the English masses, and the first quickening of those principles that, for ultimate good or evil, are bearing fruit in our own generation. It is expressive of George Eliot's regard for pure literary art, that she refrained from making use of the opportunity which such a subject afforded to convey a political moral. If 'Middlemarch' is not her greatest novel, it at least exhibits her peculiar powers in the highest and widest play of their development. From an extended canvas, with a bolder

grouping of figures and a freer use of colour than in her earlier works, we have an enhanced perception of artistic mastery and of the facility that comes from practice and study. While the earlier novels impressed by striking individualities, in *'Middlemarch'* the finished and delicate delineations of character, the sharp contrasts and the subtle play of nature upon nature, stamp the book as the work of a genius that had attained maturity. In *'Deronda'* George Eliot's intensity chiefly comes home to us; while in *'Theophrastus Such'* we are most conscious of the polished and genial satirist, whose art she has carefully eschewed throughout her novels. The remarkable impression which her last novel produced upon Jewish thought and sympathy was a strong testimony to her power from a race that has never been easily influenced by Gentile writings; while their acknowledgment of the accuracy and thoroughness with which she had grasped Jewish sentiment and culture was a striking tribute to the breadth and depth of her studies.

If George Eliot was not to complete her fame by adding to it the reputation of a great poet, it is still a matter of congratulation that she has left behind her two volumes of verse, if only as an example of the superfluity of her genius. The *'Spanish Gypsy'* is a noble romance that we could ill spare, and its poetic character fully justified its treatment in verse. If George Eliot fell short of being a poet, it was not for want of many of the higher qualities of the poetic faculty. Apart, however, from their intrinsic merits, her poems derive an interest from her prose works, and will continue to be read by all who desire to fathom the fulness of her genius, and to comprehend the true character of the power which she was able to put forth in her prose writings.

George Eliot's early connection with the Magazine was kept up at intervals when rare periods of leisure from her greater work enabled her to indulge in shorter papers. The "*Lifted Veil*," a graceful story published in the Magazine of July 1860, though anonymous, attracted general notice, and drew expressions of admiration from the late Lord Lytton. In January 1868 she contributed a pithy paper called an "*Address to Workmen by Felix Holt*," in which much sensible advice was given to the operative classes who had been recently enfranchised by the Reform Bill. From this paper, probably better than from any other portion of her writings, a definite idea of George Eliot's real political sentiments may be gathered; and they are such as neither Liberal nor Conservative will feel disposed to quarrel with. One of her shorter poems, "*How Lisa Loved the King*," founded upon a tale of Boccaccio, was published in the Magazine of May 1869, after she had kept it six years beside her. This was the last of her contributions that appeared in *'Blackwood';* but she never lost her interest in the Magazine, or intermitted her regard for the Editor to whom her early essays in fiction had been submitted. Only a few days before George Eliot's death, the feelings of his family were deeply moved by a letter from her to his nephew, Mr William Blackwood, containing the following references to the loss of her former friend and literary adviser:—

"I feel that his death was an irreparable loss to my mental life, for nowhere else is it possible that I can find the same long-tried genuineness of sympathy and unmixed impartial gladness in anything I might happen to do well. To

have had a publisher who was in the fullest sense of the word a gentleman, and at the same time a man of excellent moral judgment, has been an invaluable stimulus and comfort to me. Your uncle had retained that fruit of experience which makes a man of the world, as opposed to the narrow man of literature. He judged well of writing, because he had learned to judge well of men and things, not merely through quickness of observation and insight, but with the illumination of a heart in the right place—a thorough integrity and rare tenderness of feeling.”

Looking back over the years during which the publishers of this Magazine were in frequent communication with her, they feel that it is due to their departed friend to put on record some aspects of her character which they perhaps had better opportunities of discerning than the other friends who met her in society. George Eliot was the most careful and accurate among authors. Her beautifully written manuscript, free from blur or erasure, and with every letter delicately and distinctly finished, was only the outward and visible sign of the inward labour which she had taken to work out her ideas. She never drew any of her facts or impressions from second-hand; and thus, in spite of the number and variety of her illustrations, she had rarely much to correct in her proof-sheets. She had all that love of doing her work well for the work's sake, which she makes prominent characteristics of ‘Adam Bede’ and “*Stradivarius*.” Her grasp of business was not less striking than her literary power; and her shrewdness and foresight were such as are seldom to be met with. Anxious as she always was to retain her hold on the public, she steadily shrank from receiving in her own person the homage which the world would have gladly paid to her genius. It was in her letters that she was most wont to open her heart; and those who had the privilege of being among her correspondents will sadly miss the thoughtful and tender notes which entered so fully into the feelings and affairs of those to whom they were addressed. Her publishers cannot think, without a feeling of deep regret, that the many tokens of George Eliot's regard which were wont to come to them in the form of letters, are now at an end, and that there can be in future no red-letter days in their calendar to mark the arrival of a manuscript from George Eliot.

Not merely a great writer but a great woman has passed away. In addition to the spell which bound the world to her by her genius, she had a personal power of drawing to herself in ties of sympathy and kindly feeling all who came under her influence. She never oppressed any one by her talents; she never allowed any one to be sensible of the depth and variety of her scholarship; she knew, as few know, how to draw forth the views and feelings of her visitors, and to make their sympathies her own. There was a charm in her personal character which of itself was sufficient to conciliate deep and lasting regard. Every one who entered her society left it impressed with the conviction that they had been under the influence of a sympathy and tenderness not less remarkable than the force of her mental power. But attractive as the theme would be to all who knew her, it would be doing injustice to George Eliot's own feelings if we were to dwell upon her personal qualities. Her deep and catholic love for Humanity in its broadest and best sense, which was in itself the strongest quickening motive of her

genius, will maintain her influence in the future as in the present. All too soon has her eloquent prayer been granted:—

“O may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence : live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man’s search
To vaster issues.”

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCLXXXV.

MARCH 1881.

VOL. CXXIX.

IRELAND UNDER ORDINARY LAW.

[THE main object of the following pages is to show that neither the permanent alteration of the land law, nor coercion of a temporary nature, nor both combined, are likely to produce lasting satisfactory results to Ireland, so long as deeper and more real sources of political and social mischief remain untouched by statesmanship.—ED. B. M.]

ALL causes which have reduced Ireland to its present deplorable condition demand calm and methodical investigation. It is but waste of time to dwell upon the nature or number of atrocious deeds perpetrated under the cloak of ordinary law in large districts of that unhappy portion of the United Kingdom. It suffices to remember that the melancholy instances of recorded crimes which disgrace the Irish name, have unmistakably a common origin and a distinct purpose—the substitution of a reign of intimidation for one of law. This in broad terms fairly indicates the general object sought to be attained, if not by murder and mutilation, at all events by “Boycotting” and threatening letters. There is really no evidence to show that the action taken by such means, to secure such ends, has been confined to any particular class or section of the pop-

ulation. Until the murderers and writers of threatening letters are all in the dock it is not possible to say accurately that these culprits have been mostly furnished by the tenant-farmer class; while known facts testify the alacrity with which the tenant-farmer, the trader, the artisan, the domestic, and even the professional man, have combined in the commission of the crime of “Boycotting.” This circumstance shows the real gravity of the situation. True, the war has been waged at the outset against a small section of the community; confined to attacks on the exercise of individual rights connected with land and resting on the authority of an existing law; but there is no reasonable ground for assuming that, if carried on, it would be confined within those limits. There is ample evidence to the contrary.

In order to grasp the dimensions

of the struggle, it is desirable to look at the numerical strength of forces engaged. The population of Ireland at last census was 5,412,377, while a parliamentary return of the year following gives 19,547 as the number of landed proprietors, including 2973 absentees, and also including proprietary institutions, 161, and 5982 proprietors of less than 100 acres each, unclassed either as absentees or residents. But as all the troubles of Ireland are by some attributed only to the huge disproportion between the number of owners of land and the population, it is necessary to examine how that population is made up. This the subjoined table shows:—

Professional, . . .	152,860	
Domestic, . . .	740,195	
Commercial, . . .	105,619	
Industrial, . . .	538,135	
	1,536,809	
Indefinite and non-productive, . . .	2,813,560*	} 4,350,369
Agricultural, . . .	1,062,008	
	5,412,377	

These figures, taken in conjunction with the main features we have briefly noticed, point to the conclusion that the real source of Ireland's troubles may not lie so clearly and distinctly on the surface as some people insist. A doubt on this point implies the patriotic duty of going deeper with inquiry—of looking beneath the surface. It is scarcely conceivable that the diversity of interests represented by four millions, should

be so absolutely dominated by the particular interest of one million as to cause such union of purpose and combination of action in defeating the power of ordinary law. It would be, if true, all the more remarkable, because the chief interests of the four millions† directly depend upon law and order, and the defeat of ordinary law is the paralysis of their prosperity. The classes composing the four millions cannot even feed themselves, unless money sufficient be in circulation. The agricultural one million should at all events be able to do so out of the produce of the land occupied; if not, the Irish agrarian question is one of emigration, not tenure. Money will not circulate where there is neither order nor law; and therefore, in this crude sense, the four millions have more immediate concern in the maintenance of both. The interests of trade and commerce, of professional and domestic service, are more subtly sensitive, and consequently suffer more directly by the substitution of irresponsible intimidation and its restraints for law and individual liberty, than agricultural interests. The land will at all events survive the wreck of society, long after even the waifs and strays of capital have disappeared. Leaving out from calculation the number classed as "indefinite and non-productive," the numerical strength of the purely agricultural element is less by half than that of the professional, commercial, domestic, and industrial classes taken together. There are therefore *three* persons not directly dependent upon land for every

* This class comprises a large number of persons of no stated occupation, and children and scholars under fifteen years of age.

† It should be observed that though the statistical value of the comparisons here made is defective, by reason of including children, compensating facts, such as combinations of occupation of adults and non-classification of children—according to occupation of parents—render the use made of these figures reasonably fair; as fair, at all events, as to compare the number of agricultural tenants *with* their families with the number of landed proprietors *without* their families, which is but too often done.

two that are so dependent. This is a useful Irish fact to remember in conjunction with another—that we live in days of free trade, and independence of home-supplies of food. Now, when all these and many other circumstances have been considered in connection with the total defeat—by a few months' agitation—of ordinary law as it exists and is applied in Ireland, it is surely as well to be very cautious before assuming that the entire problem in its width and complexity can be solved by a temporary suspension of the ordinary law and by a land bill. Freely granting that both measures are necessary, what will be the real results? One act will place the farmers permanently in a more advantageous position; the other will place the ruffians temporarily in jail. But both these most distinct classes taken together are in a minority, and could not have so successfully worked the ruin of the law without the help or connivance of the majority of the remaining population. How is this preponderating power to be dealt with, which experience has proved to be so unstable that a single breath of agitation can shift its huge bulk from the side of order to the side of anarchy? This question the two measures do not touch; it apparently remains the enigma of the sphinx of Irish politics.

Repression of the few has been tried, remedies for the many have been tried, yet the proportions of this issue have not been reduced. Its features, defying time and all efforts at alteration, remain the same. It is the one durable monument of Irish political history, and yet Ireland is governed as if it did not exist as a real tangible element capable of being directly dealt with by legislation. It has been the practice of Parliament to try and influence it indirectly: thus ruffianism has been coerced to frighten

it, while individual classes have been liberally benefited to please it. Its real strength is due to the fact that it is recruited from all classes; and herein lies, not only the difficulty, but also the clue to dealing with it practically.

For the sake of distinctness we will call this combination of elements drawn from different classes "the great unstaïd" of Ireland. The improvident country gentleman, the buckeens, squireens; the failures or triflers in professions, commerce, industrial or domestic service; the thriftless farmer, or the farmer whose land even without rent cannot support his family; the labourer who will not work, and the professional idler,—these are chiefly the materials of which this "great unstaïd" is composed. The article of faith which binds this heterogeneous concourse in one common bond is—that legislation can do for individuals what they will not do for themselves. Many are what circumstances have made them, some are simply what they have made themselves. Amidst a people renowned for careless generosity regardless of consequences, and for warm sympathy uncontrolled by cold reasoning powers, the facilities for living on one's neighbours are great. In no other country is this social cave of Adullam so crowded. Only under constitutional government framed oblivious to its existence could this "great unstaïd" wield such enormous political power for evil over the honest and well-to-do. This in some degree is the reason why we hear so much of the evil side of Ireland, so little of the good,—the evil is paraded to beseech the charity of legislative change. It will be at once admitted that no Act of Parliament can help people who will not help themselves; and therefore remedial legislation can only with hope be applied to that portion of the "great unstaïd" which

cannot do so. As there are 414,291 holdings not exceeding thirty acres, representing about *seventy-two per cent* of the total holdings of Ireland, and some *forty-eight per cent* are under fifteen acres—and as a great quantity of land in Ireland is uncommonly bad, while families are proverbially large, and every family has a retinue of hangers-on—there are but too ample grounds for assuming that a numerical reduction in the strength of the “great unstaïd” should be made by emigration. There are probably one million of souls annually engaged in a struggle between the limits of starvation and the workhouse. They are born to misery, and they hopelessly cling to it because tradition and fact tell them sternly there is no escape from it. Their cry is a great political engine, their wretchedness is a useful lever in the hands of agitators, who therefore oppose its only cure. It is the key of the position of Irish discontent; yet the British Parliament, with all its power and *prestige*, has apparently neither the fortitude nor pluck to attack it boldly. Many square miles of the south and west of Ireland are but spawning-beds of human misery carefully preserved by the State. The spat is nourished by the poor-law; when that fails, by the charity of the world. Is there no statesman with sufficient humanity in his soul to impel him to grapple once and for all with the dire evil of over-crowding? If not, then the great recruiting area for the army of Irish malcontents will continue to furnish an ever-increasing proportion of men whom sheer misery drives into its ranks. These form the bulk of the rank and file of the “great unstaïd” of Ireland; and this portion alone can be reduced in numerical strength not by coercion, but by remedy—the remedy of providing opportunities for removal by a real and judicious

emigration scheme. In former days these men were patient sufferers because they were ignorant, but the State system of education has made them restless and dangerous. The proverbial disadvantages of “a little knowledge” are stimulated by empty stomachs, enforced idleness, and rags.

The difficulties of emigration must be faced if Ireland is ever to have settled peace. It alone can deprive the “great unstaïd” of its numerical strength, and rob it of that source of political power—a real cry which commands, and should command, the sympathy of the sensible. The very restlessness produced by education diminishes largely the repugnance to change, even across the sea; and if it makes the people dangerous when “cornered” by remorseless circumstances, education should make them the more ready to appreciate and to use real advantages when they get them. It is hardly necessary to say that by the use of the term “emigration” we do *not* mean shipping off the people wholesale without regard or provision for their future settlement and welfare, nor do we mean facilitating at public expense their passage to a foreign State, there to become hewers of wood, drawers of water, and breeders of possible future enemies; but we do mean a State system of judicious transplantation to the broad lands of Great Britain and Ireland’s dominions beyond the sea: and we believe it to be within the range of practical politics—home conjointly with colonial—to provide such sufficient attractions and facilities as would insure a really liberal transfer of people from overcrowded districts at home to more capacious areas of British territories. It is assumed that the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Ireland would, to use an American phrase, “go solid” against any such scheme; but this is at least

doubtful. Much would depend upon the real nature and scope of the scheme itself. If it were a weak attempt at ridding the State of a difficulty, by shuffling off responsibilities with the people it cajoles away, the priest would meet it, and justly, with bitter opposition. But if it be a genuine statesmanlike effort, clearly devised for the reasonably prospective benefit of the people whom it induces to go, some priests may be hostile to it, some may befriend it, and many may probably remain neutral. The test question will be whether it is such a plan, on the face of it, as would be offered to the surplus population of Great Britain; and this should be anticipated by making the scheme indifferently applicable to both islands simultaneously. The suffering produced by overcrowding in the cities and towns of England makes the latter proposition a reasonable one apart from all other considerations. The priests of Ireland are certainly not blind. They know better, perhaps, than any other class in the country, that forces have been created by the march of events which even they are now powerless to control. It needed not that a cleric should be hurled from the platform, others angrily howled down, and all openly defied, to teach them the story of a people drifting from religion to the Commune. The time is past for prejudice to stand in the way of remedying such an overwhelming evil as this; and there is much reason to hope that a judicious but liberal scheme of transplantation would not encounter that volume of opposition from the priesthood which the very name of emigration did when the social circumstances of

Ireland were wholly different. The "great unstaïd" of Ireland would, of course, roar and rage at the bare proposal of a remedial measure which would also be destructive to one of the great feeders of its power; but if statesmanship is afraid of this, hope for Ireland's future must be abandoned.

As regards the financial aspects of a State scheme of transplantation, attempted detail would here be out of place; but some sufficiently accurate though rough figures, showing the dead weight of expensive pauperism, cannot but be useful. The following statements, computed in round numbers, are submitted as a fitting conclusion to this portion of our subject.

About one person in every fourteen of the total population of Ireland received poor-law relief in the year 1879. In a most prosperous year (1875) one person in every nineteen received such relief, so that the variation between a prosperous and famine year is not so very great.

Now in the good year (1875) 51,462 persons emigrated from Ireland, while in the bad year (1879) the number fell away to 47,364. This falling off in the number of emigrants may be accounted for by the curtailment of money and means to go, caused by a bad season; and this is some testimony to that desire for change to which we have previously alluded.*

In 1875 the total expenditure on relief and maintenance of workhouse establishments was £771,600; in 1879 it rose to £848,000,—the total difference between a good and bad year being only about £76,000.

The figures for 1880 are not yet available, but it is probable that the

* During the years 1870-71-72, 863,604 persons received relief, while 224,197 persons emigrated. But during the years 1877-78-79 the number of persons who received relief increased to 982,329, while the number who emigrated fell away to 130,215. It appears, therefore, that in these periods emigration to relief stands in inverse ratio.

expenditure will not fall short of that of the year preceding, and it will be fair to take it at £820,000—making a total for the two years of £1,668,000. But during these years this amount was largely supplemented by Government loans, and by the generous aid of the world conveyed through public committees or by private hands. How much was distributed through the latter channels we shall never know; but as regards the former, information has been published.

The proportions of Government loans advanced for the half-year ending June 1880 for relief by work was as follows:—

To Landlords,	£312,525
„ Sanitary authorities, . .	17,188
„ Baronial sessions, . . .	90,420
	£420,133

Subsequent advances issued for the last six months of the year may be roughly computed to bring up the total for the whole year to half a million.

The disbursements of public committees were—

The Duchess of Marlborough's Fund,	£132,699
„ Dublin Mansion-House do.,	167,708
„ National Land League do.,	33,997
„ New York Herald do., (at least)	20,000
	£354,404

Summarising the foregoing, we get at the *known* total amount expended in two years upon relief of distress:—

By Poor-law,	£1,668,000
„ Government loans, . .	500,000
„ Known charity, . . .	354,000
Total,	£2,522,000

This is equivalent to £1,261,000 for each of the years 1879-80. One million and a quarter pounds have been expended per annum, and we are face to face with the absolute certainty that a bad season in 1881

will again bring Ireland as a mendicant before the world. The annual value of lands, houses, &c., liable to tenement valuation, is but a little over eighteen millions; so a sum equal to about one-fourteenth of this total valuation had to be expended in each of these successive years in order to keep people alive.

We now pass to considerations concerning the remaining portion of the “great unstead” of Ireland, composed of men of all classes, who can, but who will not, help themselves. These are the real deadly enemies of Ireland, and they deserve no pity. To talk of legislative remedies for their benefit is useless, and all legitimate means of compulsion must be employed to deprive them of their vicious power over the better nature of the Irish people. To do this, and to do it with effect, is no doubt a matter of extreme difficulty. It must be a gradual process, consistent in purpose, and patiently but unswervingly pursued—in a word, the exact opposite of that traditional policy which lets evils accumulate until ordinary law, becoming powerless, has to be suspended. As it is clear that Ireland must, in its normal state, be governed by what is expressed by the term “ordinary law,” we do not propose to examine what might be done when it is temporarily suspended. It is sufficient to notice that the practice of making pitiful examples of the humbler dupes of conspiracy, instead of remorselessly punishing its leaders, is attributed by the “great unstead” of Ireland to fear. The masses know nothing of the exigencies and difficulties of party warfare, which is chiefly responsible for such mode of dealing with their agitation. Not unnaturally, they do not attribute results to the true source, and conclude that the British Government dare not make examples of leaders;

nevertheless the injustice of visiting the offences of the strong upon the weak is fully recognised. Such assumed evidence of its fear and of its injustice naturally incenses the masses against the Government, and encourages the trade of the reckless agitator or conspirator, by promising him immunity from any serious consequences in the pursuit of his calling.

But it may be asked how, under conditions of ordinary law, does it happen that so much evil accumulates as to render resort to coercion periodically necessary? The reply to such a question involves three somewhat varied considerations.

1. The conditions of society produced by the character of the people;
2. The nature of that ordinary law;
3. The usual method pursued in its application.

It is chiefly to the last of these points we shall now direct attention, selecting such a sample of prominent defects in the methods of carrying out the ordinary law as may in some measure account for its periodic failure. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to offer some general remarks relative to the more obvious results produced by the peculiarities of Irish character as exhibited by recent events, when the ordinary law was put to a strain beyond its strength.

The social war in Ireland practically originated a struggle between landlords and their agents, &c., and the masses; a pitched battle between right and might; the few against the many. The masses having organised their battalions, advanced boldly under the flag of terror; the opposing few cowered under the banner of law. On the one side there has been admirable combination and good leadership. On the other no leadership; and only a cry to Government for help, has testified to a common and well-defined cause. The sole attempt at practical combination, or organi-

sation, on the side of property, was that which saved Captain Boycott's crops. And here the chief burden of arrangement fell upon the Government, the expense upon the British taxpayer. Yet it cannot be said justly that the gentlemen of Ireland lack courage or determination. Scores of landlords, agents, magistrates, &c., have in disturbed districts nobly done their duty in the face of great difficulties and regardless of extreme dangers. All the more trying has been their position, and all the more credit do they deserve, in view of the fact that they, isolated and alone, have individually tried to do what could only be done with any effect by the combined resistance and co-operation of the classes they represent. Long before the land question entered upon its acute phase, a land committee, with a secretary and offices in Dublin, was formed. It was generally supported by the landed interest, but the sum total of practical results was the production of useful pamphlets, a deputation to the Lord Lieutenant with closed doors, and a string of resolutions describing the state of the country. The Conservative press in Ireland has constantly published letters calling on the "representatives of property" and the "friends of order" to combine in the defence of their rights; but these voices were soon drowned in the chorus of discordant and multitudinous suggestions as to the manner of conducting operations. Numerous communications from persons of the Sir Lucius O'Trigger stamp, according to their own accounts, appeared in all the glory of editorial type proposing all kinds of determined resistance; but generally the hand of Bob Acres was betrayed in an apology for not signing their names, "for obvious reasons," or because "they did not wish to become objects for the assassin's

bullet," which is much about the same thing.

In the first phase of this war, when the struggle lay between landlords and tenants, it became clearly evident that on the tenants' side there was organisation, on the landlords' side there was an absolute want of power of cohesion. It is useless to say that combination, on the part of the landed proprietors, could have produced no practical result, and therefore they did not combine. Had ten considerable representatives of landed interest in each disturbed county in Ireland agreed to simultaneously serve notices on their properties, and demanded protection from the Government in doing so, the Government could not have refused to give a sufficient force on a given day in each county. But the Government had not the force at its command sufficient to provide for such a reasonably possible contingency. To protect some seventy landlords' agents, &c., simultaneously acting over an immense area of Ireland, in pursuit of their rights by legal process, would have been a very different operation from that of protecting a handful of labourers on Captain Boycott's farm. Even such a small effort at combination as this on the part of landed proprietors must, by forcing the hand of the Executive, have secured a triumph. A Property Defence Association has indeed been formed in Dublin, but experience has proved that even the direst necessities of immediately personal interests cannot coerce Irish landlords into common or united action. This being so, it follows that united action in enforcing the operations of ordinary law, in its wide and general bearings, is not, under present circumstances, to be expected from what is commonly termed "the English garrison in Ireland." It is hardly necessary to draw at-

tention to the marked distinction, therefore, which exists between the leading characteristic of the community of capitalists in Ireland as compared to that in Great Britain. Strife between capital and labour is carried on in England or Scotland by combination on one side against combination on the other, and a natural equilibrium is produced; in Ireland, power of combination is confined to one side only, and the result is social chaos. When the operations of this social war extended, the mercantile and professional classes became involved; and they, finding all the organisation on one side, surrendered, and readily took their places in the ranks of the enemies of property. The friends of law and order having no nucleus to rally upon, struck their flags all along the line.

Now, if in Great Britain the friends of law and order exhibited such marked incapacity for united action, such complete inability to unite for the purpose of mutual assistance while the masses were being organised for a ruthless attack on interests which are the foundations of society, ordinary mortals would not hesitate to declare Great Britain in a state of revolution. Few would be sanguine enough to suppose that a temporary suspension of ordinary law, with the introduction of measures favourably affecting the interests of one particular class, would permanently restore English society to its normal condition. Fewer still would be disposed to rest satisfied that the existence of defective legislation, affecting only a portion of the masses arrayed against property, law, and order, could be the sole and only cause of such complete social disruption. Yet these are the views generally taken of the Irish revolution of to-day. The

public mind apparently accepts them without question or inquiry, and too readily concludes that what is certainly true on the eastern side of St George's Channel, may neither be true nor applicable on the western. Surely it is hardly rational to rush at the conclusion that in 1880-81, Ireland, with a population of five and a half millions, is in a state of anarchy simply because a large proportion of some 680,000 tenant-farmers are dissatisfied with a law of tenure which in 1870 they regarded as a substantial benefit, and accepted "as a message of peace." Legislation based upon such hasty and carelessly formed conclusions is more likely to disappoint its promoters by immediate failure than to satisfy their dreams of its permanent success. But the probable fact that remedial measures based upon just claims of a particular class cannot give permanent peace to Ireland, is no argument against their adoption. It is, however, a most cogent reason for tracing mischiefs periodically accumulated under the operation of ordinary law, to their true sources. A painstaking diagnosis must be made before popular prescriptions are hastily compounded by Parliament. If this be not done, then, as a matter of course, Ireland will get worse instead of better. Matters have become too serious in Ireland to yield to half measures or quack remedies; and it behoves Parliament to scrutinise calmly and soberly the various grave symptoms of her disease, not attributable to one special cause but to many. Those who have not an intimate knowledge of Ireland and the Irish character can have but little conception of the real difficulties of governing Ireland. They do not take into account the one broad fact that there is no such thing as a current of healthy public opinion in that

country. There are spontaneous and periodic irruptions of ideas; but that mighty and durable force of *opinion*, gradually developed by accumulating observation and reason, is really non-existent. This great indicator of public needs, by which the constitutional government of Great Britain is regulated and adjusted, is wanting in Ireland; and the sudden outbursts of a faction are therefore but too frequently mistaken in England for the expression of the matured judgment of the whole Irish people. There is but too much ground for fear that the present movement may be thus falsely regarded, despite innumerable proofs that the strength of its following has been created artificially and by force. Threats of outrage and of "Boycotting" have swelled the ranks which purely constitutional agitation had failed to recruit. They have been fed by compulsion and disciplined by fear; and these are the only two instruments which can produce really dangerous general combination in Ireland, and, conversely, the only two forces which can efficiently break their power when established. For the most part the people of Ireland are moral, and well disposed to submit to authority when asserted. Their vices spring more from soft hearts than hard heads. Mental ingenuity and quick imagination uncontrolled by faculties of sober reflection, render them as a rule suspicious and mistrustful even of one another. The result is an absence of individual moral courage and independence of character. This characteristic defect is not confined to particular classes, and produces consequences which cannot be ignored, influencing, as we shall presently see, the operations of ordinary laws framed on the supposition it does not exist. Moral courage and independence of character are the most

marked feature of the English and Scotch; and therefore it is not surprising that ordinary law, both in nature and mode of application adapted to England or Scotland, may require some special modifications when applied to Ireland.

Before pointing out some modifications which would appear to be necessary, let us briefly notice how this great defect in Irish character operates generally on society. In the first place, it destroys power of natural and voluntary cohesion in pursuit of a common purpose, and tends to make popularity of the moment the supreme arbiter of public actions. Mutual mistrust of each other, and the fear of incurring popular disfavour, prevented the landed proprietors combining. Suspicion of rivals, and fear of damage to business consequent upon loss of popularity, hurried the mercantile classes into the ranks of the Land League. Personal violence and mutilation had to be resorted to in order to unite by fear the agricultural classes. None of these great sections of society have given proof that they possess in any combined form the courage of settled convictions. Each has given some evidences of internal mistrust and suspicion, and all have betrayed the social power exercised by the influence of fear. This could not be, were it not that the preponderating number of individuals in each class are deficient in moral courage and independence of character. It is clear that, so far as the execution of the ordinary processes of law depends on private individuals, the absence of independence of character and moral courage will probably result in the influence of fear asserting itself over a sense of public duty. It will naturally happen that, when possible, the performance of unpleasant public duty will be shirked; when not possible, that

it will be discharged more in the interests of personal expediency than of the vindication of fact. And, in truth, this is exactly what does happen. It is sufficiently exemplified by the difficulty of collecting truthful information, and of obtaining verdicts consistent with evidence. Naked truth has but little attraction for a mind overflowing with ingenuity, imagination, and unreasoning sympathy. Such a mind delights to clothe it in picturesque garments, supplied by fancy, prejudiced by fear. Successful public life and public action in Ireland but too often consist of a series of clever efforts to compromise just as much truth as may be sufficient for the moment to insure popularity. Emotional good-nature pervades and sways all classes, producing, as a universal result, a general desire to make things appear pleasant, or to excuse what is plainly bad, even though facts must be coloured and truth hidden to do so. "The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," is difficult to extract. Even the pressure of an oath cannot magically sweep away the craving for making expert compromises between truth and popularity but too readily suggested by ingenuity or prompted by emotional sympathy. Juries acquit odious malefactors on clear evidence of guilt, simply because there is no opportunity for such compromise in the question "guilty, or not guilty?" There is no settled public opinion to resent an insult to justice, while the applause of the mob is the reward of an ingenuity which baffles the law. With truth often perverted, and justice frequently defied in courts of law, why expect to find either continually exercising paramount influence in all the many ramifications of Irish society? As a matter of fact, ingen-

uity often veils truth, and emotional sympathy constantly usurps the functions of justice, so that cunning is mistaken for virtue by the crowd, and trading on the weaknesses of the people passes for patriotism. Legislation cannot alter prevailing characteristics, but it can certainly mitigate evils growing out of its own defects. If it cannot, in the words of Penn, "let justice have its impartial course and the law free passage," it can at least remove those visible obstacles created by the nature and application of the "jury laws" which experience proves to have barred the way of both. The facilities afforded to men of property and better education for shirking the duty of serving as jurors are but too readily taken advantage of, and these are the very men who most loudly protest against the constant miscarriage of justice. Such public duty is irksome to the respectable, its skilful avoidance is deemed an honour rather than a disgrace. A visitor to an assize town while the commission is sitting, will find only the residuum of the jurors' list in the box,—the country gentlemen, the leading merchants, and the substantial traders, farmers, &c., being conspicuous by their absence, even from the court. So long as judges have the legal quantity of jurors, they do not trouble themselves as to the quality. If Parliament desires to do real "justice to Ireland," let it coerce the cream of Irish society as well as the scum. Compulsion is now required not only to restrain ruffianism, but to prevent the well-to-do classes from neglecting the discharge of public duties. A penalty of a heavy fine—without possibility of remission or reduction except on sworn testimony of physical or mental inability, calculated and fixed by a certain proportion to the annual valuation of the juror's prop-

erty in the county or borough—would, if universally enforced for absence from the common-jury box, do much towards leavening the juries with men of intelligence and character, and tend to the due execution of justice and maintenance of truth. This sort of absenteeism, habitually and wilfully practised by the bulk of the respectable, is a far more serious and widespread national evil than the fact that out of some 13,404 individual proprietors of over 100 acres of Irish land, 2973 do not reside in Ireland. Every lying verdict flung at the judge from the jury-box has a widespread evil influence. It depraves the people, and furnishes a theme for rejoicing in the camp of the "great unstaïd" as a proof that British laws cannot be made to work, and are therefore wrong altogether; while the flower of all classes cries out that "Government really should do something." We propose that it should—by forcing the more intelligent and the better educated into the common-jury box, and letting none of them escape from the individual responsibilities of maintaining the law. We do not mean that such a measure should be merely temporary, to meet the grave emergencies of the moment, which have been accumulated under the operations of ordinary law, but continue until the upper and middle class portion of the "great unstaïd" have learned the salutary lesson that Government cannot do for people what they will not do for themselves. It would be no hardship on the sensible and stable people of Ireland, of all creeds and classes, to be so compelled. What they really want is encouragement in the performance of public duties which are unpopular. At present they are deterred from acting contrary to the prevailing custom of their class in

such matters, because by doing so they now render themselves conspicuously obnoxious, only to be placed in a hopeless minority. The members of the "great unstaïd" would regard such a measure as barbarous interference with what they deem their special privileges—liberty to *talk* of misgovernment, and freedom from individually *acting* in the correction of manifest abuses which are really not the fault of the Government, but arise chiefly from their own indolence in public affairs. If the upper and middle classes of Ireland cannot now meet boldly the surging tide of pauper democracy, it is because they have pleasantly floated down the stream of popularity, heedless whither it led. They have forgotten that property, no matter of what nature, involves the fearless exercise of public duties as well as the assertion of private rights; and the masses, which once looked to them for light, being given nothing but the glimmerings of popular ideas reflected back, now hope to find it in the ruins of property.

We pass from a matter vitally connected with the administration of justice in the superior courts, so far as private individuals are concerned, to briefly look at the conduct of business in courts below.

Although there is no accurate proof of the fact, still there is ample reason to believe that while the number of local magistrates is large, constant attendance to magisterial duties is small. Much is done by the resident magistrate—a paid Government official—partly because it is his duty, and partly because the local magistrates do not see why his paid services should not be very freely used to save them trouble. All the real business of Quarter Sessions is done practically

single-handed by the county chair-man, a paid barrister. The constitution of this inferior court is thus practically bureaucratic—we need not pause to consider why; suffice it to point to the conditions we have sketched of Irish society, and say "*Nascitur non fit.*"

Nevertheless the local unpaid magistracy is still a great social power, perhaps more abstract than real. The simple fact of J.P. following a name carries more popular weight in Ireland than in England. A stranger casting his eyes over Irish newspapers, soon finds himself at a loss to understand the meaning of mysterious capitals. He may understand what is conveyed by D.L. or J.P.; but their frequent appearance, and a host of other combinations—such, for example, as P.L.G.,* T.C.,† ostentatiously paraded in wearisome repetition—will at last drive him to conclude that these symbols possess some unknown charm or hidden power in the country. His conclusion will be right, and the explanation easy. In a land where plain fact and rigid truth are difficult to get at, an official stamp is of infinite value in the market of public esteem. The Irish magistracy, however, not only fairly represents the intelligence and property, mercantile as well as landed, but also the distinguishing characteristics of the people, tempered by superior culture, and toned down, more or less, by contact with the outside world. It possesses as much confidence as society charged with suspicion can bestow. Cold impartiality in dealing officially with one's neighbours' affairs is not believed in by warm-blooded ignorance, which regards power as opportunity for exhibiting sympathy or venting spite. The Petty Ses-

* Poor-Law Guardian.

† Town Commissioner.

sions Courts are the theatres of the rural districts, commonly affording more vicious amusement than real instruction; and they are always crowded. The popular actors are the witnesses, whose quick wits baffle justice at the expense of truth, or the attorney who speaks to "the gallery;" the magistrates form part of the stage properties. These regular exhibitions educate the people in the science of defeating legal skill, and insubordination is stimulated by the latitude necessarily allowed to attorneys, of which the worst class make the worst use. No man in his senses would propose to keep the public out of court; but it is a grave question whether "dirt-cheap" law is "real justice" to Ireland. It directly encourages frivolous litigation, wastes time and money on trivial strife, and provides too ample facilities for the cultivation of the cunning art of perverting truth. But it may be said the remedy lies with the Bench, which should stop frivolous litigation, and consequent waste of money, and put its foot firmly down on perjury. Those who think so neither know the difficulties of the magistrates, nor the character of the people with whom they have to deal. Let us look below the surface. In the first place, the court costs are but *eighteenpence*.* True, no case comes for trial without a summons signed by a magistrate. When any complaint is made by one person against another, the magistrate has no option, but is *bound* to issue the summons. Happily for him and for Ireland, he has no such option. The exercise of discretionary power would involve either previous inquiries from plaintiff, defendant, and their witnesses, on unsworn testimony out of

court, or the exercise privately of irresponsible instinct, which would be worse. Therefore, for one shilling and sixpence, a trial in court before a full audience is secured; for the initiatory process, costing one shilling, cannot be arrested, and the other sixpence is added when the case is heard and decided. Once in court, how can even "justices' justice" dismiss without having fully heard both sides? But by the time this complicated work is finished the mischief is done, the crowd has been delighted by the spectacle of 'cuteness dodging truth, and by passionate appeals to the feelings of the "great unstaïd;" while time has been wasted and the money gone. It costs but "one-and-six" to spite a neighbour by dragging him into court from his work on some colourable pretext; while the extra popularity of the moment, and subsequently in the pot-house, gained by affording amusement to the mob, is well worth the local attorney's fee. The only real remedy for all this would be a judicious discriminating but considerable increase of the Petty Sessions Court costs, by legislation. This would dam at its source the flood of petty, frivolous litigation, which is destructive to the honesty and *morale* of Ireland. There is another source of evil involved by this one-and-sixpenny system of law, and not the least important one. By increasing to an enormous extent the Petty Sessions business, a multitude of cases must be got through either by a sacrifice of time or by a sacrifice of scrupulous care in their investigation. The one aggravates the mischiefs before alluded to, while the other encourages perjury, by obviously diminishing the chances of its detection. Noth-

* If the summons has to be served at a greater distance than four miles from the court, an extra sixpence is added.

ing is more prejudicial to justice, and more grossly unfair to the honest, be they plaintiffs, defendants, or witnesses, than haste. In the least civilised and more remote districts, where the population is thickest, it is the necessary rule to hurry over the proceedings of Petty Sessions. Flying shots are aimed by instinct at the rights and wrongs of a case: they may hit, according to the skill of the magistrate, but it is to be feared they but too frequently fall very wide of the mark. Such methods of proceeding deteriorate the judicial character of the magistrate, who by degrees comes to rely more on knowledge obtained outside than by evidence laid before the court. The quick perception of the public finds this out perhaps sooner than he does himself. Colour is thus given to suspicion that justice "can be worked" by external influences. The traditional idea of the people is that magistrates "can be got at;" but the crimes and errors of the Irish Bench of former days have been dispersed by wider knowledge and closer union with England and English thought.

There is yet one more aspect of the consequences of "cheap law" which must not here be passed over in silence. The most substantial safeguard against the undue exercise of personal proclivities in administering justice is a full bench. It is impossible for persons to privately interview any considerable number of magistrates living far apart; it is easy for them to do so when but one or two are likely to attend Petty Sessions. When there are several justices on the bench, the decision turns not on the individual opinion of one, but on the combined opinion of all. The only information in common will be that laid before the court; and such evidence necessarily becomes the only standard of judgment. This in-

sure more searching examination, thereby diminishing the chances of successful perjury. But the accumulation of pettyfogging litigation caused by merely nominal court expenses has a deterrent effect upon the attendance of magistrates. The best of them are the busy, not the idle, country gentlemen, or merchants, who really have not time to waste upon the solemn investigation of most paltry disputes. They may be ready to sacrifice private work and serious occupations in order to discharge really important magisterial duties, but they cannot reasonably be expected to sit for hours hurrying over case after case of miserable family wrangles and imaginary grievances. The result is that the Bench duties are largely performed—like the jury duties—by the residuum of the magistracy. To coerce the constant attendance of local magistrates at Petty Sessions so long as such a state of things exists, would be unreasonable. Once, however, the business was reduced within the limits of essentially necessary proportions—in the way indicated—the serious interests of law and justice in Ireland would be advanced by stimulating a more regular attendance. It would be no real hardship to make the retention of the Commission of the Peace contingent upon a certain number of attendances in the year, exclusive of periods of absence from the county. This would be only pushing an established precedent a little farther; for no magistrate can vote on the appointment of the Petty Sessions clerk, who has not qualified by a specified number of attendances on the bench during a certain period immediately preceding the nomination to the appointment. When there is a probability of a vacancy occurring, it is often surprising how the bench fills, for everybody is in-

interested in getting somebody else a Government appointment in Ireland. Such gentle compulsion as is here suggested would manifestly not affect the magistrates who now, to their own credit, voluntarily perform Petty Sessions duty with assiduity. It might be felt as an infringement of personal liberty by such members of the magistracy as are also members of the "great unstaïd," and whose special mission is to talk eternally of the bad system of government, while neglecting their own public duties both to the Government and the people.

Either the local magistracy of Ireland is or is not to be trusted. If it is, how comes it that it is not applied to the discharge of Quarter Sessions business as in England? Why further supersede its functions, when matters in any locality assume any serious or unusual aspect, by shifting all responsibility and control on to the shoulders of the Government-paid resident magistrate, who perhaps drops from the clouds of another district? No better method could be devised for encouraging the idea that Government officials must do all the unpopular and serious work, leaving all other persons in Ireland free to swim with the stream or to shirk the responsibilities of their position. Surely this manner of proceeding is not an incentive to the natural leaders of the local magistracy to assume their legitimate position? If it be a principle of government of Ireland that the local unpaid magistracy cannot be trusted in the same degree as that of England, why not be honest and abolish it? for more harm than good must come by pretending to carry out ordinary law according to the English system, when in reality it is carried out by paid officialism. The Queen's Speech proclaims that by "the establishment of county

government in Ireland founded on representative principles," it is hoped to supply a "serious want by extending habits of local self-government." If the local magistrates of Ireland, carefully selected as they are, cannot be depended upon to apply, as in England, the ordinary law, is it in the least probable that the magic of representation will develop a class for the discharge of other county business more worthy of confidence? The loyal and firm administration of ordinary law all over Ireland is a far more serious question than the establishment of county boards; and to extend the habit of its fearless application, and to create sympathy with its objects by local energy, is a serious want which paid officialism can never satisfy. By extending the responsibilities of the local magistracy, such of its members as belong to the "great unstaïd" would be dragged to the light, and made to feel that unpleasant duties cannot be shirked; while the stable and common-sense magistrates would naturally command more local sympathy and support from the worthy, for it would be developed by the sense that peace and order depend upon local continuous effort rather than on spasmodic official help. The tendency of Irish government now is to gradually convert the natural leaders of society, such as landlords, merchants, and magistrates, into social "Aunt Sallys," and to encourage the populace to shy at them the sticks of its ignorant contempt. Ireland is really governed by the Under-Secretary sitting in his office at the Castle reading voluminous reports furnished by the resident magistrates and constabulary, but it is given the serious institutions of England to play with; and yet the world wonders that ordinary law so constantly

fails. It so fails because the English method of its application in Ireland is a sham, and coercion becomes periodically necessary to remedy the evils produced by ordinary law applied under a system of pretence.

In concluding these remarks, it is desirable not to pass unnoticed one or two facts concerning the public-house question in Ireland, affecting as it does the power of that portion of the "great unstaïd" drawn from the lower classes.

Professor Leone Levi tells us that the proportion per 1000 of persons committed for drunkenness in England and Wales is 7, while in Ireland it is over 18. One person in every fifty-four of the population of Ireland was arrested for drunkenness in 1879. It is somewhat startling to think that, adopting rough methods of calculation, it may be said, in 1879 about one person in every eleven of the total population either received official relief, or was officially arrested for being drunk. The estimated value of spirits and beer consumed in Ireland during the famine year of 1879 was about £9,375,000—a sum exceeding half the total annual valuation of all Ireland before referred to. In that year a sum equivalent to nearly two-thirds of the annual value of Ireland was expended in relieving distress and supplying liquor. It is a noteworthy fact that the operation of the Sunday Closing Act in the first year of its application (1879) reduced the number of arrests for drunkenness by nearly nine thousand, and the total value of spirits and beer consumed by over one and a half million pounds sterling. The movement which culminated in that particular Act embraced men of all creeds and classes in Ireland, and it is one of the few blessings she has conferred upon herself. It is

an evidence of the great dormant political force which might be asserted by the stable and true men of Ireland, and encourages hope that the influence of the "great unstaïd" may yet be shattered by the consolidated power of common-sense Ireland, finding its expression in a current of healthy public opinion. Meantime the multitude of pot-houses in poverty-stricken districts is at once the memorial of magistrates' work and the sign-post to guide a Parliament sincerely anxious to do true "justice to Ireland." The prevailing custom in remote districts is to combine the spirit licence with all other branches of trade. Drinking is found to increase business, for a muddled brain takes an optimist view of shop debts. In remote districts nothing hardly can be bought except in a house also selling spirits, so great has been the anxiety of the local magistrates not to make invidious distinctions in granting licences. The poor underfed people, in the transaction of their little business, are thus forced face to face with great and sore temptation. What wonder if they get drunk? What chance have men so situated of keeping sober? These districts are drunken that magistrates may not be unpopular, and that inflated credit may yet increase. Licensed premises are natural haunts of the idle, and therefore of the working, members of the "great unstaïd." They are but too often the propagating-houses of sedition; and being in very many districts places of ordinary business as well, the honest and well-disposed have no option but to be brought into contact with its teaching and to learn its ways; and as in nine cases out of ten they are in debt for shop goods to the proprietor, they must preserve a discreet silence as to what they see and hear, or a visit from the

process-server for shop debts will be the consequence. By all means let there be a sufficiency of straightforward public-houses, pure and simple. When it is remembered that the number of detections for illicit distillation and dealing, for the year ending March 1879, was in England 8, in Scotland 2, while in Ireland it was 683, it is obvious that facilities for legal drinking should not be too closely curtailed in Ireland at present. A Parliament really in earnest to remedy their wrongs, should at least insure that the Irish people shall have an option of doing their ordinary business in an atmosphere free from the fumes of whisky, and apart from half-drunken preachers of communistic balderdash. This can be done by making a combination of ordinary business with the retail sale of spirits and beer illegal. No doubt, in doing so, and in reducing the number of licensed premises in certain districts where their accumulation is a scandal and disgrace, expense must be incurred by giving reasonable compensation to publicans affected by so obviously desirable a change. Grim irony and just retribution might suggest meeting the charge by laying on taxes on armorial bearings and carriages, from which magistrates and successful traders, in common with all other persons in Ireland, are now free.

We hear much of the necessity of protecting the tenant against the landlord; nothing of the still greater necessity of protecting him against the publican and the unscrupulous trader. The rent debts of the Irish tenantry are a bagatelle to the shop debts. Mr Parnell speaks of "the poor wretched ten-

ants who have not the moral courage to go to the landlords and say, we will not pay you what we believe to be an unjust rent;" but he discreetly does not follow the "poor wretched tenants without moral courage" into the whisky-shop or the clutch of trade spiders and "gombeens," secure of many victims, in that web of vicious credit in which they are caught wholesale by specious arts. By all means protect the tenant against the landlord: but let it not be forgotten that the champion of the tenant declares him to be "poor and wretched;" and why, therefore, allow his farm-stock and farm-produce—without which the land is useless—to be seized because, as Mr Parnell assures us, he is without "moral courage," and therefore cannot go to the trader and say, "I will not pay you what I believe to be an unfair price, nor suffer you to charge me such high interest, because you have encouraged me to run into debt beyond my means"? The real person the tenant has to be protected against is evidently himself; and what single Act of Parliament can do so?

The above remarks on certain causes which contribute to the accumulation of political and social mischiefs, under the operation of ordinary law as artificially applied in Ireland, are not by any means intended as an argument against any alteration in the land laws that may be proved to be just and reasonable, but simply as a protest against the present popular supposition that their alteration, combined with the coercion of a few of the reckless characters, is at all sufficient to bring lasting peace or real prosperity to troubled Ireland.

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY—PART V.

CHAPTER XI.

It was with very mixed feelings that Clifford awaited the explanation which he presumed his secretary would be ready to offer when next they met. For a time, indeed, his cousin had driven all thought of Miss Reid out of his head. His mind kept dwelling on the fascinating picture of a home shared with this beautiful creature. "Surely she would come in time to be gracious to me," he thought, "if I were her husband. I should not be so foolish as her mother in my way of dealing with her, nor lay myself open to being treated as she treats her mother;" and indeed in his heart the young man was conscious of a certain power which he believed would suffice to enable him to maintain a proper place in married life. "I am shy with strangers, I know, but I can hold my own with those I know well. Hilda likes me all the better because I snub her now and then;" and then his thoughts went back to the meeting on the river, and he forgot his cousin for the moment, while his cheek flushed as he recalled to mind all the points in that episode, and like a man awaking to the recognition of some disaster which he had forgotten in his sleep, so it seemed to him as if he had sustained a painful shock. Although he intended to marry his cousin, yet it was an outrage to his feelings that his secretary should have a lover. To think that while he had allowed a feeling of sentiment to grow up in his heart about her, she should all the time be deceiving him—for so in his pique he deemed it. "She is clever and pretty, no doubt, and refined in mind and manners," he

said to himself; "but her surroundings are low and vulgar, as was only to be expected. Burrard's comments on the incongruity of the females and males of this class were sound enough. It is the same thing always. The pretty and well-mannered servant-maid, nice and neat in all her ways, and who appears to have caught something of the refinement of her mistress, yet finds the company of some lout of a butcher's boy attractive. So it is with Hilda: she merely consorts with her kind; her refinement is but skin deep. That noisy lover of hers is no doubt quite to her taste. Well, I have yet to hear what she has to say for herself. She was evidently ashamed to be seen in such company, which is something. Yet if she is satisfied, what business is it of mine? She is not for me, why should I trouble myself about her inclinations? It is better that she should be provided for in this way than not provided for at all."

But although thus trying to assure himself that it was fortunate his secretary should not be fancy free, Clifford was not the less sensible of a feeling of disappointment, mingled with a craving to know more; and, in view of getting the desired explanation, he went to Miss Reid's room soon after she arrived on the following Monday morning, taking the bundle of letters just received as a pretext.

"What do you think of this?" he said, handing her the first. It was a begging letter, of the kind which formed a not inconsiderable part of those addressed to him, but was somewhat more diffuse and circumstantial than usual. The writer, it

said, was formerly an officer in Her Majesty's service, occupying a confidential appointment, who had served his queen and country faithfully for many years, but had been induced by the bad advice of friends to sell out and embark his capital in commercial business, which, owing to the dishonesty of those in whom he had trusted, had proved unsuccessful, and who was thus reduced to penury. Of late, indeed, he had come again into the possession of an indirect income, and now a very favourable opportunity had occurred of embarking in a highly profitable undertaking which must infallibly bring in an extraordinarily remunerative return, but for which a small capital was temporarily wanted. Having heard of his, Clifford's, great and discriminating benevolence, the writer ventured to ask for the temporary aid of a hundred pounds, for which unexceptionable personal security would be offered, together with a reasonable rate of interest, and which would rescue a deserving man and ex-officer from the painful position of dependence on a member of his family, very galling to an honourable mind, in which he was now placed, and would secure the writer's eternal gratitude. Such an opportunity of doing a good action without any risk seldom occurred. The letter, in short, was very much of the usual kind, except that a tone of assumption ran through it, implying that it was rather the borrower than the lender who would confer the favour. This rather tickled Clifford's fancy. He often responded to these applications—which was no doubt the reason why he got so many of them; and although usually imposed upon, yet on some occasions he had come upon cases of genuine distress, where, although the applicants had parted with their self-respect, they were still honest. In one instance, which

did not appear more promising than this, a loan given had actually been repaid. So that when he put the letter into Miss Reid's hands, it was not merely as a matter of form; he looked to see what she would think of it.

She gave a hurried glance at the letter, and then exclaimed, with flushed face, "I don't think this is at all a case for you to take up, sir."

"Why, how can you tell? You have not even read it."

"I saw quite enough of it," she replied, with evident confusion, "to see that it was not a case worth going into. If you will allow me, I will reply to it suitably."

"Very good," said Clifford, although puzzled to account for her excited manner. "By the way, I forgot to notice the writer's name. Let me look at the letter again," and he held out his hand to take it.

"I really don't think you need trouble yourself about it any further," she replied, holding the letter behind her. "I will answer it suitably, and will promise that you shall not have any more trouble about it."

Clifford said no more. Then there was some further talk on business, but still no reference to the matter which had brought Clifford into the room; till, just as he was leaving it, disappointed at her reserve, yet unwilling to open the subject himself—for, after all, what right had he to complain because she had a "follower"?—Miss Reid said, "I beg your pardon, sir, but there is one thing more."

"Well, what is that?" said he, eagerly turning round, with his hand on the door.

"It is about what happened on Saturday." Then with some hesitation she added, "I hope you did not disapprove of my not appearing to recognise you. I thought you would not wish your friends to know that——"

"That we knew each other as we do? Well, no; I am afraid it might lead to complications."

"Ah, that is it!" said Hilda, looking down, and wringing her hands nervously. "We are both in a false position. It seemed so simple when I undertook the situation. But you were right, Mr Clifford, in what you said then about the difficulties of carrying out such an arrangement. I see them only too plainly now—difficulties on every side. But yet I meant it for the best."

"You don't like this secret understanding? I think it is rather good fun."

Hilda burst into tears.

Clifford, moved by her distress, and yet uncertain how far she was not acting a part, advancing, took her by the hand.

"What is it, dear Hilda?" he said, kindly.

But Hilda withdrew her hand, and moved a little distance off, and smiling as she wiped away her tears, replied, "Nothing, sir—at least nothing that you can help me about, unless indeed——"

"Unless what?"

"Unless we break off, and you let me go about my business. I ought never to have come here."

"Why, what has happened?" he cried, eagerly; "I am not at all anxious to make the change. Surely I have not given you any cause for annoyance?"

"Oh no, Mr Clifford, it is not that; you have been only too good to me. But I thought the part I had undertaken would have been so easy, and I find it so difficult,—things look so differently when you are absolutely penniless."

"We certainly stand on a peculiar footing; but, after all, things are not really different from what they were when we first set out; if there be any change, it is all for the better. Hilda, can I say too

strongly how much I admire you for the way in which you carry out your part. I think," he added, archly, but with a little hesitation, "I deserve a little credit, too, for my own bearing."

She did not appear to notice the latter sentence, but continued: "Things look so different, so easy, when you are in want, as I was when I first came. I am afraid," she added, smiling through her tears, "that I was almost unsexed by poverty and care; but now I see all the difficulty of the situation."

"What difficulty, Hilda? We have only to do our duty. '*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*' It would be pleasanter for you, no doubt, if there were no reservations or concealments necessary; but that, from the nature of the case, is impossible. Yet matters are no worse than they have been at any time before. We shall not always be meeting in company with our respective friends at Panting Crook."

"Ah, that is it; we cannot always keep our friends out of the secret."

"I should not mind a bit, as far as my friends are concerned, except on your account." (His conscience whispered as he said this that he was saying more than was quite true). "Of course, your case may be different. I can quite understand"—and here he spoke bitterly—"that you might not like your friend—your boating companion—to know of your position here."

He spoke as he felt, under a selfish impulse coming uppermost to put her in the wrong. "Here is this girl," he thought, "for whom I am nourishing a tender friendship, and who pretends to reciprocate the feeling; yet in her heart, no doubt, she prefers the company of that vulgar boor."

"Ah," she exclaimed, "it never struck me that you would look at the thing in that light. Yes; I

had better tell you. That person was my brother."

"Your brother!" and at this revelation Clifford experienced a surprising feeling of relief. "Your brother! So you have a brother as well as a father? Excuse my saying that he is not a bit like you."

"You think not?" she said, simply. "Yet I suppose there must be a family likeness."

"Possibly. I was not thinking of that; I hardly saw his face. I meant that I should have expected a brother of yours to be a very different sort of person."

"We were not brought up together," she replied, with an air of reserve; "but still we are brother and sister."

"And are you living together now? Excuse my asking this; but I think there can be no harm in my knowing so much. Well, then, now we have come to know each other so well, let me say plainly, why should not both your father and brother be told exactly what your situation here is, if, as I infer, they do not know it at present? And why should not I make their acquaintance? That would put an end to all possibility of"—he was going to say scandal, but checked himself, and added—"misconception."

"Oh no, sir," she cried eagerly; "on no account are they to be told of—"

"Of our secret?" he interrupted, not ill pleased at the prohibition; but he could not forbear from adding, "Is it because you think they would object?"

"No," said Hilda, blushing; "I was not thinking of that; but it is better even as it is. Believe me, sir, I am not ungrateful because I feel all the embarrassment of my situation, the more acutely perhaps for the very reason that your kindness does so much to make it a happy one. But it is better to let

things be as they are than to tell anybody."

"So be it. I was thinking of you more than of myself when I made the proposal. But, Hilda, if I yield to you on this point, I have one command to lay on my private secretary which I expect her to obey."

"What is that, sir?"

"It is just about the 'sir.' She is not to call me 'sir' any longer."

"If you desire it I will say 'Mr Clifford' for the future."

"Why not 'Robert'?"

Hilda smiled archly, and Clifford took it to mean that she saw her power over him and enjoyed it; but then a look of distress and confusion succeeded, as she replied, "I think it should be 'Mr Clifford,' if you please."

"Very good; as *you* please; but at any rate *you* shall be Hilda;"—and Clifford returned to his own room to muse over the interview, feeling strangely joyous and elated. "That she should be such as she is," he thought, "notwithstanding her low surroundings, is evidence of her refinement. But why seek external evidence? Is she not womanly, and refined, and gentle in all her thoughts and ways? My cousin, no doubt, would say that she wants the languid ease which she herself possesses. But with the advent of easy circumstances, that assumption of business-like primness, and that look of anxiety which is sometimes so prominent, would soon pass away. But has she a heart, and how does it feel towards me? I am the shield standing between her and poverty. Is that a favourable condition for awakening a warmer feeling than gratitude? And how am I to discover if such a feeling does exist? How separate myself from my circumstances? What is there in myself to make a woman fall in love with me—Hilda any more than my cousin, who, if she takes me at all, will certainly

take me for my money, and because she thinks she cannot help herself?"

But while Clifford was thus fluttering like a moth between two flames, his conscience did not fail to whisper that if he really meant to marry his cousin, it was plainly his duty, even if he could not love her, to avoid the temptation now facing him. It would be bad enough to marry as a matter of duty, but still worse to marry her if his heart was given elsewhere. Putting aside the notion that Hilda might lose her heart to him, without any declaration on his part—which he was too humble-minded to entertain seriously—the idea of trying to win her for a wife was one that he dared not cherish. To

marry Hilda was to sacrifice his fortune; and what would Hilda gain by marrying him if it left her in poverty? Ah, if he had been only allowed to make his way in the world, to live by honest labour, and to please himself! There was, indeed, another alternative, which kept on presenting itself to his mind, more than ever since he had had this glimpse of Hilda's home surroundings: would the sacrifice involved in such a scheme be too great a one to ask of her? What was the mystery which surrounded her? She has a home, and yet does not belong to it. She says herself that her brother and she were not brought up together. What would it cost her to break the tie again?

CHAPTER XII.

This first glimpse of Hilda's family which Clifford had now obtained, was soon followed by a further revelation.

Two days later, as he was returning home from an afternoon walk, he noticed a person standing on the pavement before the door of the Mansions, who looked at him rather curiously as he entered. Clifford returning the look as he opened the door with his latch-key, the stranger turned away and sauntered down the street. As Clifford entered, he met Hilda in the hall, on the point of going out.

"So late," he said, smiling and holding the door open for her to pass.

"It is only four o'clock," she said, "and I have been doing up Mrs Simmonds's accounts for her."

"But are you taking away papers to work out at home?" he said, pointing to the roll she carried in her hand.

"No; this is only a roll of music;" and then, seeing that he looked curious, she added, "I generally

carry a roll of music to and fro; it looks as if one had teaching work."

Hilda smiled as she said this, and Clifford smiled too in response, yet withal feeling a sense of displeasure. Although he did not dislike the secret relations established between them, yet the notion that she should not only practise a deception of this sort, but should even appear to enjoy doing so, jarred on his feelings. It seemed to put her on a lower level than that to which his fancy had raised her. Yet to this feeling succeeded one of elation. Would not the conquest be all the easier? The course of these fleeting thoughts was suddenly checked by a voice. "Hilda, my dear, will you not introduce me to your friend?" It proceeded from the person on the pavement, who had come up to them, and was now standing close behind Hilda.

She started at the sound, the blood mounted to her temples, and then she turned pale, and for the

moment she seemed unable to speak, while Clifford stood wondering what revelation would follow the exhibition of so much emotion. But she soon recovered her self-possession sufficiently to be able to say, looking at Clifford, "My father, Captain Reid;" and then turning to the latter, "This is the gentleman who has been kindly giving me literary employment."

"And I am sure you have found her a very useful aid," said the Captain, readily. "My daughter has had the best of education, sir, and has not been used to this sort of thing, I can assure you. She has moved in the best society, with nothing to do but to amuse herself; but I have been unfortunate in my circumstances lately, and we are all of us obliged to put our shoulders to the wheel. So I am reaping the advantage of having given my daughter a good education. It has been so much investment of capital, in fact, and a very good one, as it turns out,"—and the Captain laughed mildly at his little joke. This, as Clifford afterwards learnt, was his way of expressing the fact that he was living entirely on his daughter. What he now noticed was the uneasy way in which, while her father was speaking, his daughter was watching himself. She was looking to see whether he had recognised the words her father employed, as resembling something which he had heard before.

"But you have not yet told me the gentleman's name, Hilda," resumed the Captain. "Young ladies, however well educated, never understand business," he added, in a patronising tone, addressing himself to Clifford.

Hilda, with evident reluctance, introduced Clifford by name.

"The eminent philanthropist, I presume," said the Captain, with an insinuating smile; "but I might have guessed that, for I understood

that he lived here. This is indeed a pleasure. Well, Mr Clifford, we are all much indebted to you for your kind patronage of my girl. Her contribution to the family purse has been very timely and acceptable, I can assure you; and I am sure you have found her very quick at business, notwithstanding my little laugh at her. I ought to be a judge on such points, for I have been a man of business all my life."

"We ought to be moving, papa," said his daughter, interrupting, "if we want to catch the train."

The Captain pulled out an old hunting-watch and looked at it for a few seconds, as if much struck with the force of his daughter's remark, but without opening the case. "Quite right, my dear," he said, putting it up again; "punctuality is very important. I have always inculcated habits of punctuality in my family, Mr Clifford," he continued; "and you see," he added, with a self-satisfied smile, "that my training produces good fruit. Come along, my dear. I hope," he concluded, taking off his hat and making a bow with an air in which self-importance and servility were ludicrously blended, "that Mr Clifford and I shall soon become better acquainted." And so saying, he offered his arm to his daughter, and the two walked away.

Clifford watched them as they went down the street. Hilda looked down, as if ashamed of herself, or of what had passed. Her father strutted along slowly, with a mild swagger, putting his foot down as if each step were a matter of importance, expressive of his strength of character. He was a man of about fifty, not ill-looking, with a face in which an assumption of importance struggled vainly against the expression of weakness that pervaded it. His clothes were not ill made, nor much the worse for wear. On the whole, an ordinary-

looking man, with nothing noticeable about him.

The two passed down the street almost in silence, the Captain, who was not a good walker, not having breath for more than a passing remark; and it was not till they reached the Waterloo Station that he was able to express himself on the situation.

"Well, my dear," he said presently, taking off his hat to wipe his brow, "you are to be congratulated on your employer. A very gentlemanlike and agreeable man, and a kind and considerate one, I am sure. I don't want to force your confidence," he continued, as his daughter remained silent; "I can trust you implicitly, I am sure."

"That was why you watched my footsteps, I suppose, notwithstanding your promise?" replied his daughter, more in sadness than with irritation.

"Nothing of the kind, Hilda," replied the Captain, apologetically—"nothing of the kind; but I naturally felt an interest in your affairs, and as I happened to be passing that way, and I thought you might be coming out soon, why, there seemed no harm in waiting there. I must confess I should never have guessed that was Mr Clifford, if I had not seen you speaking to him."

"That hardly explains how you came to know where my employer lived."

"Ah, there, my dear Hilda, you must excuse my saying that your old father was a little too clever for you. You thought to disguise your writing; but the letter I received to one I had addressed to Mr Clifford was plainly in your hand, and putting two and two together, I concluded that this was the secretariat work on which you were employed. You see I am naturally quick about things. Of course, when I first addressed Mr

Clifford, I had no idea that you were connected with him. I merely applied to him as a capitalist of repute for benevolent actions, and I must say, Hilda,"—and here the Captain wrought himself up to a pitch of virtuous indignation—"I think it was hardly seemly in a child of mine to address me as you did, and to put such words into Mr Clifford's mouth. I was not begging, as you called it; I was merely proposing to him to let me have the temporary use of some capital—a small capital, for which I would have offered unexceptionable personal security."

"There is one thing I must insist on," said Hilda, without replying to his complaint: "I do intreat of you that, whatever else happens, you do not let Harry share in your discovery. If Harry gets to know about my engagement, there will be an end of all peace. He will never be able to keep himself from trying to get something out of Mr Clifford, or annoying him in some way. If Harry comes forward, it will end as before in my losing or giving up my engagement."

Hilda, in saying this, meant to imply that she was equally in dread of her father doing the same thing, if he were not restrained in some way. Whether or not her father took the hint, he merely said, "I think you may trust my discretion, Hilda, in this as in most matters. But let us get an evening paper. Would you like to read it first? No? Well, I just want to see how stocks are to-day;" and so saying, he took out his spectacles, and making himself as comfortable in the corner of the second-class compartment as its angles permitted, began to read his 'Globe,' while Hilda sat silent, occupied with her thoughts.

Nothing further passed between them until they had left the train, and were walking home, when the

Captain asked, with a little uneasiness perceptible in his voice, "By the way, Hilda, did Mr Clifford happen to notice the coincidence of my signature with your name?"

"He did not."

They had continued their walk a little further before her father spoke again. "That is odd. Did he not know who I was before he got my letter? I should have thought the coincidence would have struck him at once."

"He knew nothing whatever about you, or about any of us. He took me on trust, I suppose," she added, and a passing smile played for an instant over her anxious face. "He liked my looks."

"Then," said the Captain, stealing a glance at her sideways, "are you working there under an assumed name?"

"No." Then, after a pause, she added, "The truth is, I managed to get the letter away from him before he had time to read it carefully, or to notice the signature."

The Captain made no comment on this, and they continued to walk on in silence, until they drew near to their house, when Hilda broke it. "I hope it is quite understood, papa, that this discovery is not to be made any use of? you promise me that, don't you?"

"Haven't I said so already, my dear?" replied her father, in a tone of mild reproach. "I know quite as well as you do that Harry is not to be trusted in such matters. You may depend on my caution."

Hilda did not say anything further for a few seconds; but just as they had reached the wicket of the little garden before their cottage, she stopped and laid

her hand on the Captain's arm. "Papa, I must speak out; it is not only Harry that I am afraid of. You know what I mean. There is shame and humiliation enough in all this secrecy, as it is; but I must be spared the still further disgrace of any one troubling my employer."

"Who wants to trouble your employer, as you call him? Haven't I said that I hadn't a notion who he was when I sent off my letter? Why accuse your father falsely, Hilda?" He spoke with an angry air of injured innocence.

"I must beg it to be understood quite plainly," continued Hilda, with desperation, bringing out the words with difficulty, but not heeding the interruption, "that if any approaches are made to Mr Clifford by any one, or any use is made of the knowledge of my being employed by him, to obtain money, that moment I will resign my situation—no matter what happens to us all afterwards. Please understand, father, that I am quite determined about this, even if it should end in our going back again to beggary."

The Captain looked at his daughter with an expression of surprised swaggar, as if he were about to reprove her for her ridiculous suspicions; but meeting her beseeching yet resolute gaze, his expression gradually softened down to one of mild expostulation. "You need not make a scene just before the windows," he said; "you know I never thwart you in anything. There, I give you my word as a gentleman and an ex-officer. There, will that do?"

"Thank you, papa," said Hilda, gently, and they passed on into the garden.

CHAPTER XIII.

The cottage occupied by the Reid family was in the neighbourhood of

the little town of Rainham, in a quiet lane leading down to the

river. It was a humble place, although, until Hilda had obtained her present appointment, really beyond their means; but the Captain had bought the lease of it when temporarily flush of money, and had not been able to dispose of it, and it now cost them nothing to live there but the rates. There was a slip of garden opening on to the lane, not ill kept—for the Captain had a taste for gardening, and plenty of leisure. The cottage held but a slender stock of furniture, and that rather for use than show—the principal ornaments being the Captain's shako, sash, and sword-knot under a glass-case, —surmounted by his sword and a few ill-painted likenesses, including one of himself when a young man, in a tight coatee, with a good deal of florid hair and a fatuous swagger. But generally the furniture seemed limited to bare necessities, and the articles to have been bought without much reference to the rooms they were placed in, or to each other; and the house, small though it was, could have held more without being crowded.

"It must be nearly dinner-time," said the Captain, as they entered the house—a fact also announced by the strong smell from the kitchen, "so you won't be long, Hilda, I hope; for I am hungry, if you are not." And in a few minutes the two were seated before the dinner which the little servant had brought up. "I ordered a steak," said the Captain, taking off the cover after saying grace. "There is nothing more economical, really, because there is no waste; let me give you a little. A small slice? Not any?"—and as Hilda, engaged in tea-making, declined the portion held up, the Captain thereon transferred it to his own plate.

"Where is Harry?" she asked.

"I left him at home when I went up to town," said her father; "but

I have no intention of waiting for him; he ought to know the dinner hour by this time. But I ordered in a pot of mild stout, for him and me; I think it will be more wholesome than tea, with the steak."

Harry at this moment settled the doubt about him by coming into the house, and presently took his seat at the table with a sulky nod of salutation to the others.

"Well, Harry, what have you been doing with yourself all day?" said his father, in a good-natured tone.

"There is not much to do in this infernal little hole," replied the young man. "Much the same as any other day, I suppose."

"I thought perhaps you might have been on the river," observed his father, mildly.

"A fellow can't be going on the river all day, I suppose," retorted the young man; and then added, somewhat more gently, to his sister, "But I'll take you out for a pull this evening, Hilda, if you like."

"Do so, my boy, by all means," said Captain Reid. "I think I will take the rod, and have a try for roach."

The young man made no reply, but took his share of the steak and porter, presently, however, vouchsafing the remark that his sister ate very little.

"Hilda has a good luncheon every day," observed his father. "Now I have had none, except a mere snack in town—a bun and a glass of ale; no—let me see—yes, it was a bun first, which I got at the refreshment room at the station, and a very nasty place it is; and then I got a bit of bread and cheese and a glass of beer in the Strand. So that I feel I have a right to be hungry."

"I never said you hadn't," retorted the young man. "What I said was that Hilda eats nothing."

"Hilda generally has a fair appetite, I think," replied the Captain, with an attempt to appear angry; "but I decline to argue the matter with you, sir."

Then silence fell on the repast. As soon as it came to an end, the elder gentleman carried out his plan of fishing, while the brother and sister also went down to the river where their boat was moored—the same in which they had appeared on the occasion already recorded—a boat which, like the house, had been bought in what the Captain had supposed to be his prosperous days, when he had a little ready money, and which had been kept through all their difficulties by desire of Hilda, who was now paymaster for the family, as affording her brother the means of amusement, and possibly of keeping him out of mischief.

Harry Reid was a strong, well-built young fellow, and on a superficial view might have been pronounced good-looking. He had curly hair, dark eyes, ruddy cheeks, and regular features; but the face was both weak and sensual, and sufficiently indicated his character. The lad had been brought up in barracks, allowed to pick up only such fugitive teaching at day-schools of garrison towns as the wandering life of the family permitted. When a little fellow, he had been a pretty child, and a favourite with the officers, having the run of their rooms, and learning a good deal of information of a miscellaneous sort which was not calculated to do him good. As he grew older this attractiveness passed off, and he was merely a precocious boy, whom familiarity had robbed of the respectful admiration which boys usually feel for young officers; and the junior members of the regiment were now as eager to snub the too forward youth as their predecessors had been before to spoil

him. Meanwhile young Reid had been brought up to look upon it as a matter of course that he should himself become an officer in turn. Where the money was to come from for purchasing a commission was, indeed, not clear: in Captain Reid's household no domestic problem ever was clearly worked out; things were allowed to drift; but the matter was finally settled by the abolition of purchase, and the introduction of the competitive system, when Captain Reid, who was not in the habit of facing difficulties, but rather let them come upon him, was obliged to admit that his son's expectations could not be satisfied. While the boy was growing up, his sister was no longer a member of the family household. Their mother, a faded beauty, in bad health, who contributed but little besides her small annuity and her large chemist's bill to the domestic economy, had at least the sense to perceive that barrack life, bad as it was for her son, would be still worse for a girl in her teens, and had thankfully accepted the offer that Hilda should be received for an indefinite time under the care of her married sister—an arrangement which ended in Hilda being practically adopted by her aunt and uncle, who had no children of their own. Mr Forrester was a gentleman of independent means and no profession, who had, or fancied himself to have, delicate health, needing a frequent recourse to Continental baths and a southern climate in the winter. Thus the Forresters had remained abroad ever since Hilda came to live with them, and the girl had seen nothing of her own family for many years, until summoned home to the care of her dying mother. This home was no longer a barrack,—for Captain Reid had been removed from the paymastership of his regiment, in consequence of irregularities in his

accounts; and although he blustered a good deal among his friends about the conspiracy which he said had been got up against him to accomplish his ruin, he failed to demand the court-martial which alone afforded the means of clearing his character, but sending in his papers, was permitted to retire from the service without submitting his conduct to further investigation. Reid was an easy-tempered inoffensive man, not unpopular in the regiment; and the family under their difficulties received a good deal of kindness from the officers. But the regiment went on foreign service, and the ex-paymaster was soon lost sight of; and when Hilda rejoined her parents, they were living in a small lodging in the suburbs of London. There Hilda nursed her mother through her last illness, stricken with remorse at the deadness of her feelings towards her dying parent. "Why is it," she asked herself, "that although I can do my duty as a nurse, I cannot feel as a daughter ought to do? I am no better in this respect than a hired attendant." In truth, it was difficult to recall, in the poor querulous patient, any traces of the mother of her childhood, whom she dimly recollected; and although she would not acknowledge the feeling even to herself, she could hardly but feel conscious of a sense of bitter disappointment to find that, although she was doing her duty to the utmost, neither mother nor father seemed to be conscious of it. The poor sick lady was too much occupied with her own ailments to think about her daughter's conduct: she accepted her ministrations as a matter of course, and with a good deal of fretfulness—partly constitutional, partly the effect of illness. Nor was her father more sympathetic. "You must find it very dull," he remarked now and then, "living in this humble fashion, after all the comfort you have been

accustomed to;" but he spoke in such a way as if expecting her to contradict him. He found Hilda's presence a great comfort, however, and was quite content to accept the position without giving himself much concern how it came about, or how long it would last, and to allow his daughter to overwork herself freely in night-watching. The Captain, it should be added, was by no means unkind to his wife, and would smoke his pipe and read his paper in her room, while Hilda was engaged in household offices, or in taking little Arthur, the youngest boy, out for a walk. But his monetary affairs, as he called them, occupied a good deal of his time. He would often be closeted with seedy-looking men—financial agents, he told Hilda—and would come home from a day in the city with his pockets full of prospectuses of bubble companies and other speculative undertakings he was getting mixed up in, which he would thrust with an air of importance into the drawer of his writing-table, observing mysteriously that in a short time he should be able by his exertions to give them all a more comfortable home. Meanwhile Master Harry was left very much to himself. Hilda passed most of her time in the sick-room; the Captain made his good financial prospects an excuse for not taking any steps to find his son some employment; and the lad spent most of his time away from home, getting an intermittent but excessive supply of pocket-money from his father, and usually coming back very late at night. As some one was always up in the sick-room, he could be admitted without much disturbance; and his father, after some altercation at first, had given up objecting to the irregularity.

It was not until her mother's death that Hilda was called on to

make the great struggle between duty and inclination. So long as she was required to nurse her mother, her aunt and uncle submitted to her absence—Mr Forrester, indeed, not with the best grace, although her good aunt's letters of advice and sympathy had been the girl's great support in her virtual solitude. But soon after the funeral came a summons to return to them at Nice, just when her father was no longer able to conceal from her the fact that he was penniless. He had been living, since his retirement from the army, on the proceeds of his commission. But the inevitable day when that would be exhausted had been forestalled by the foolish speculations into which he had been cajoled in the hope of making his fortune. It was the old story of kites and pigeons. The Captain, indeed, could hardly be called a simple soldier, for his whole life had gone in staving off duns and difficulties; but he was weak and credulous, and was soon plucked to his last feather, and had given bills for a good deal more into the bargain. A sudden flight to Boulogne became necessary—Hilda being left in charge of the suburban establishment, with a ten-pound note, and an injunction to be very economical, and to be sure and pay ready money for everything: there was nothing so economical as paying ready money for everything, her father said, as he took a hasty leave of her.

Of the sufferings undergone by Hilda on this occasion it needs not to speak; but the Captain soon succeeded in effecting a compromise with his creditors, and got free of his liabilities by the sale of the reversion of his wife's small income, which had come to him for his life. Hilda's mother had more than once told her, in such intervals as the poor lady was able to give from the con-

templation of her own sufferings to thoughts about her own family, what a comfort it was to feel that there would be a certain income to depend upon after she was gone. "Reid will spend every penny he can lay his hands on, I know," his wife used to say, with the prescience born of long acquaintance with her husband's weaknesses; "but there will be always my dividends coming in every quarter for you all to fall back upon." Hilda of course would return to her aunt and uncle as soon as her mother was buried,—so the invalid would go on to say,—and be provided for; and there would be enough to keep Reid in food and clothes, and Harry too. Harry was the mother's favourite; he was the son born in her happier days. Arthur's birth had followed at a time when her own health had become so engrossing a subject with the invalid as to leave little room for other interests. But although Reid could not touch the capital of his wife's property, which was held by trustees, he was able to dispose of his life-interest in it; and having purchased his freedom in this way, he was now absolutely penniless, save that he still held the lease of the cottage at Rainham, and thither, as it happened to be unlet, the family now took refuge. Fortunately Hilda had a little stock of money which she had kept in reserve—for her uncle, who had good reasons for knowing that money would not be plentiful in the Reid household, had sent her a handsome cheque for her private expenses. Some of this had been spent on sick-room needs, and Harry had cajoled her out of some, on the plea that the governor kept him so tight for pocket-money. But there remained a considerable fraction of the sum which, by frugal management, furnished for a time means of daily support for

the family. But this was spent. And now, when a decent interval had passed after her mother's death, came the summons which she had been long expecting, to return to her adoptive parents.

It was impossible for Hilda not to feel a keen longing to rejoin them. There was nothing in the colourless character of her father to win her affections from the relatives who had been like parents; and the sordid home, and the recourse to constant subterfuge and meanness which living with him involved, had not in her case even the sense of familiarity to weaken the disgust which it caused her. Still, duty seemed to point the other way. In most good women there is the latent desire for self-sacrifice; and the sense of self-sacrifice was heightened in this case by the fact that neither father nor son seemed at all conscious how much she would surrender by remaining with them. It was not that Captain Reid needed much consolation in his bereavement. His character was too superficial to take a deep impression from anything, and so long as he got his pipe and glass of gin-and-water and newspaper of an evening, neither the pecuniary nor domestic troubles of the day disturbed his equanimity. Still, to abandon her father and brothers in their poverty, and for a life of luxury and idleness, seemed impossible. The only alternative was to lay bare the penniless condition of the family before her aunt, and to ask for help, until her father and elder brother could find some means of earning a livelihood.

Hilda's statement of affairs called forth a very angry letter from Mr Forrester to his brother-in-law. He had been helping Reid liberally from time to time, as the latter, unknown to his daughter, had applied to him for aid, and was indignant

to find that the Captain, when professing to make a full statement of his affairs, had told him only a portion of the truth, as of course was but natural. Money which, the Captain assured him, when asking for it, would suffice to clear off the temporary difficulties he professed to be labouring under, had all been spent, and the recipient was none the better for it. He had muddled it all away, and was absolutely penniless. The most kind-hearted and even-tempered brother-in-law might be excused for feeling angry at the prospect of having a whole family on his hands for an indefinite time—for this was what Hilda's revelation seemed to foreshadow. But Mr Forrester was not an even-tempered man: although generous, he was querulous and exacting; and he was now especially irritable because of his niece's prolonged absence, for her presence about him had become very necessary to his comfort. He replied, therefore, in a violent letter, that Captain Reid had imposed upon him and abused his kindness, and that he would do nothing more for him. Hilda must choose between her father and himself. Mr Forrester must indeed be angry to write a letter at all, for he was an extremely indolent man, who usually believed himself to be incapable of exertion. Hilda had been accustomed to write all his letters for him, and to transact all his business, and she could well understand the inconvenience her detention in England must be causing him. By the same post, however, came a letter from her aunt, enclosing a cheque and counselling patience. She quite understood that Hilda could not leave her own family just yet. Her uncle was naturally very angry, but he would come round in time. In a few days came the further announcement that Hilda might stay a little longer. Meanwhile her aunt hoped

to be able to remit a sufficiency to keep the little household going, although, as she truly observed, so long as Hilda stayed at home there was one mouth the more to feed. And the kind aunt from time to time sent money in her letters; but Hilda could infer from the irregularity of the amounts, that the remitter must be having no small difficulty to obtain them, seizing the opportunity to get them when her husband was in a good humour. She could infer also, from hints in the aunt's letters, how much less tractable her uncle was in his niece's absence. Mrs Forrester was evidently having a trying time of it with her querulous, hypochondriacal husband.

Meanwhile the days wore on, and neither the Captain nor Harry seemed to be any nearer to getting the desired employment, and it became only too evident to Hilda that, so long as they could find any one else to support them, they would not be likely to make any serious efforts to support themselves. Another difficulty which sorely perplexed Hilda was the disposal of her little brother Arthur. The child was sweet-tempered and affectionate, and passionately fond of his sister; according as he was brought up would he turn out well or ill; and she trembled to think what might become of him if left alone with his father and elder brother. Hilda's stay with her family had been prolonged from week to week on this uncertain footing, when the tidings came of her aunt's death. The strong healthy woman, whose survival of himself had always been regarded as a matter of course by the sickly husband, had been carried off suddenly. The news came to Hilda by telegraph. It was followed by a letter from her uncle, containing scarcely any particulars, but calling on her to join him instantly and help him to support the burden

of his almost unendurable sorrow. To Hilda, too, this was a grievous blow. She felt quite alone in the world, now that the person she loved most was gone from it. But there could be no doubt now which way her duty pointed, and she hastened to make her preparations for departure, feeling too that she would be the better able to help her family by rejoining her uncle, than if absent from him; when, just as she was about to start, little Arthur was taken ill of fever, which soon became dangerous, and it was plain that the child would have little chance if left to no better care than that of his father. She had no alternative but to ask her uncle for a respite, which was grudgingly accorded. Her uncle, indeed, although he could not but admit the plea, was deeply offended. Hilda's election to nurse her sick brother implied, he thought, her secret belief in the unreality of the hypochondriac's own ailments.

Little Arthur's illness was a long one, and his recovery protracted; and it became evident to Hilda, from the tone of her uncle's brief and infrequent letters, that he was gradually becoming more reconciled to her absence. The cause of this change of feeling was at last explained by the announcement of his marriage to a lady—so his letter ran—whom he had known and respected in happier days, and who had now consented to lighten the solitude which, with his shattered health, he found unendurable. Under these circumstances, and having thus found a partner who, although she could never efface the memory of his lost angel, would do her best to soothe his declining years, he could not but acquiesce in the decision which Hilda had apparently formed to change her home for good. The letter concluded by saying that the writer had instructed his bankers to pay

her a hundred pounds a-year, in quarterly instalments, and that he had despatched to England a box, packed by Mrs Forrester, containing a selection from her aunt's trinkets and shawls, which he thought she would value. This was the last letter he wrote to Hilda. Hence-

forward, as the latter instinctively expected would happen, he delegated the business of correspondence to his new wife, whose letters to Hilda encouraged replies so little, that in a short time communication between them came perforce to an end.

CHAPTER XIV.

Thus was the tie finally severed which bound Hilda to her old life. The hardships of the new one on which she had now entered were not the worst part of it. Her active spirit had always secretly revolted against the idle life to which she had been accustomed, spent in wandering from one foreign bath to another—winters at Nice or Rome, and summers at Homburg or Baden. Her aunt's companionship had been to her almost its only charm; she had in her heart been dreading a return to the old life, now that her aunt was gone; and she could not help feeling that the new Mrs Forrester—a maiden lady of middle age and small means, who had been staying in the same hotel with their party, before Hilda came to England—was not much to be envied.

But her father's reception of the news did not tend to sweeten the inevitable bitterness of feeling with which at first she regarded the prospect of her new life. "Well, my dear," he said, handing back the letter which she had given him to read, "I think William might have done a little more for you, after the expectations which he always held out. He ought at least to have started you with a little capital. But he always was close in money matters. But you are heartily welcome to my modest home: I am always ready to share my last crust with my children;" a way of putting the

case which was to be literally fulfilled, the Captain at this moment not having the means of buying another. Hilda's small annuity was, in fact, the sole support of the family, and her short experience of sordid cares was now to be intensified. Housekeeping, which, up to the time of her coming home, had taken the form of merely paying hotel bills, and drawing out cheques for her uncle to sign, had indeed assumed a more practical form from her first arrival, and by this time she had learned the art of making a little money go a long way. Like many women, she was indifferent about what she ate; and the Captain, to do him justice, was simple enough in his tastes; but Harry had a big appetite, and little Arthur needed just now especially to be well fed. Hitherto they had been living on expectations and remittances of uncertain amount, but now that their income was fixed, it was necessary to regulate the scale of living accordingly, and Hilda soon found the difficulty of supporting a household on a hundred a-year. Her uncle had been used to spend as much on clothes and trinkets for her; he was always very particular about her dress and appearance. Perhaps he expected her to ask him for further help, and awaited the application. He must know of the difficulty she was placed in. But Mr Forrester was one of those persons with definite imaginations,

who see only what is in view; lavish to those about them, forgetful of the absent.

It was evident that some means must be found of adding to the family income. The Captain talked a great deal about getting employment; but his efforts in that line were limited for the most part to answering advertisements which offered an assured income and agreeable occupation to gentlemen desiring those advantages, the reply to which resulted invariably in the demand either for preliminary fees, or the production of a small capital, to be put into the light and gentleman-like business advertised. Hilda at first, in her simplicity, used to advance the money for these fees, till they made such serious inroads on her slender purse, that she was obliged to take a stand and refuse to waste any more money in this way. Her father, who was of a sanguine temperament, then began to address himself to his old military acquaintances, representing how a trifling sum would suffice to put him in a position to support his family, and would get a guinea here and there, which he applied for the most part to the prosecution of his inquiry for business, although he could not altogether resist the temptation to embark a portion in mining shares, usually fixed at amounts to suit small purses. "I look upon it as the investment of so much capital," he would say. "Some day I shall make a hit on a really good thing, and then we shall be more than repaid."

But Harry, at any rate, must go to work; and the young man and his father spent a good deal of time and money in fruitless visits to make application for appointments. The young man's appearance and bearing, were not prepossessing from a business point of

view, nor did his father's advocacy help him much; and he might have remained unemployed for an indefinite time, if Hilda had not at last undertaken a part in the personal canvass; and it may probably be set down to her sweet face and gentle manner, that the young man at last got a situation as clerk in an insurance office. The pay at first would be trifling, but sufficient to cover his journeys to and fro: he would be put in the way of learning habits of business, and would be kept out of mischief.

But all the expense of these visits and inquiries could not be met from Hilda's income; and in her stress for money she bethought herself of answering one of the advertisements wherein the best price is offered for ladies' cast-off clothing. Having once tasted the degradation involved in receiving the visitor whom her letter brought to the cottage, the further steps in the same direction were more easy. Bit by bit she parted with all the more valuable articles of her handsome wardrobe; but this only staved off the evil day when the butcher's and baker's bills could not be paid.

Then Hilda herself broached to her father the idea of selling some of the jewels which had belonged to her aunt, and had been sent to her by her uncle on his second marriage. It was one morning after the poor girl had been telling her father of their desperate state—tradesmen pressing for their accounts and no money in the house—that she went up-stairs to her room, and brought down a ring.

It was one her aunt had always worn. "I thought of taking this to the jeweller at Rainham," she said, with tears in her eyes. "What do you think he ought to give me for it?"

"I had hoped that the day would

come when I should have seen you wearing all your pretty things, Hilda," said her father, who, however, had seen with stoical indifference his daughter's dress growing daily shabbier—"and very well you would have looked in them; but necessity is a hard taskmaster." The Captain delivered himself of this aphorism as if he had graduated in the school of the porch. "But, my dear Hilda," he continued, "it would never do to take this ring for sale here; my credit in the place would be gone if it were known we were parting with our capital. No, no; I will do much better for you than that; I will take it to town and get you the full value for it. I know exactly the right place to go to;" and the Captain walked off to the station in a most business-like way.

"Well, Hilda, my girl," he said, jauntily, on his return in the evening, "I have made a capital bargain for you; I have got you ten pounds for the ring, and that without selling it; I have only mortgaged it; and here," he added, taking nine sovereigns and some silver out of his pocket, "is the money, less three shillings my expenses, and eighteenpence for the bit of fish which I got in town for our dinner. I thought we might allow ourselves a little treat this evening, now that we have got time to look round us again." And indeed, with nine pounds odd in the house, their difficulties seemed to the Captain to have passed away into the distance. "And here," he continued, "is the security," and he held up a little card. It was a pawnbroker's ticket, the first Hilda had seen; she was to become more familiar with them afterwards.

With this accession of ready money, and full of the necessity of "nursing their capital," Captain

Reid relaxed his efforts to find employment for a few days, which he spent pleasantly in fishing. But Hilda, foreseeing that ten pounds would not last for ever, was busy trying to find employment for herself. She played and sang with taste and skill, and spoke French almost as well as her own tongue. These accomplishments should stand her in good stead, now that little Arthur no longer needed her constant care; and by going out as a governess she could reconcile her sense of duty with an escape from this odious life. There would be one mouth less to feed, and a larger income for the others. But Arthur must not be left wholly without her care, lest he should grow up like his brother, so that her field of employment in this line must be limited to the work of a daily governess. Hilda soon found occupation of this kind in the neighbourhood. The work was hard, and the return small; for a great part of the day was lost in going to the different houses where she had to give lessons, scattered about the neighbourhood. But hard work became more than ever necessary, because Harry was soon returned on his family. The lad was idle as well as ignorant, and unpunctual into the bargain; and after a short trial the office got rid of him. Under this new trouble Hilda gladly welcomed an opportune engagement offered with a family living near Rainham, which would employ her for the whole day on more advantageous terms than her present scattered teaching yielded. She would only have one walk morning and evening instead of several during the day, and a better income than she was obtaining from separate lessons in different places. The family, indeed, would have been glad to retain her altogether; but Arthur could not be left, so

she was to go immediately after breakfast, and return in the evening. Harry could now be of at least some small use as escort home, for the nights were dark and the road solitary. Sometimes her father would go to fetch her, but more often Harry. The young man, who, to do him justice, had been really ashamed of himself when first dismissed from his situation, and had been much more quiet, if not less sulky, than usual, displayed for once a readiness to make himself useful, and appeared quite eager to act as Hilda's evening escort. His readiness to face the dark evenings, no matter how cold or wet they were, was almost surprising, for self-sacrifice was not one of the young man's virtues. But it was explained one day—or rather, to poor Hilda it never was exactly explained—that the young man had taken advantage of the excuse afforded by having to wait for his sister, to open an intrigue with one of her employer's maid-servants; the affair being discovered, the lady, in her anger, insisted on the immediate discontinuance of Hilda's engagement.

Poor Hilda had not the heart to seek re-employment at the houses where she had been teaching before, and a weary time followed in looking for other occupation, when even the pangs of ever-increasing poverty seemed scarcely more bitter than the consciousness that she was every day losing something of her own refinement, as the work of solicitation grew more familiar. And when, become almost desperate, she at last summoned up courage to apply for the post which first introduced her to the reader, she was very conscious of the change which she must have undergone before such an act could have become possible. "Can I," she thought, as she hurried home after

her first interview with Clifford, hardly knowing whether the sense of relief from pressing want was greater than the pain involved in such degradation,—“can I be the same Hilda as of former days? Surely I am hardly more different from my former self than these two lives are—my past and present.” And indeed, querulous and exacting as her uncle had been when she lived with him, selfish and indifferent although he had shown himself as soon as she left him, both he and her aunt had been very tender over her, and scrupulously careful to guard her from all contact with what was disagreeable while she was a member of their family. Although leading a wandering life at hotels and *pensions*, they had been particular and even fastidious about admitting strangers to acquaintance with their niece. Miss Reid was thought by their foreign acquaintance to be reserved and even disdainful. She was admired for her grave and refined appearance, but other young people were a little afraid of her. “What would they say of me now?” she thought, as she hurried homewards; “what would my aunt say to see me so changed? But ah! were she alive, how different would have been my fate!” and as her thoughts went backwards, she dwelt with bitter pangs of self-reproach on the impatience she had allowed herself to feel because that life, which, looking back on it, appeared so happy, had seemed at the time too easy and idle and luxurious. “And the gentleman, too, whose servant I have become,” she said to herself, “kind as he seems to be, he must despise me in his heart; he cannot know what I have passed through before I came to this.” But Clifford, although a little suspicious at first, had not misjudged her so much as she supposed.

AMONG THE ALBANIANS OF SOUTHERN EPIRUS.

"By Suli's rock and Parga's shore
Exist the remnants of a line,
Such as the Doric mothers bore."

—BYRON.

STARTING is always a laborious effort in the unpunctual East. There seems no end to the small delays. First, a muleteer does not put in his appearance, then a servant has forgotten some article of alimentary necessity, and finally, perhaps, there is a difficulty with the Pasha about the escort. For, alas! there are now few provinces in Turkey where one can dispense with the latter *impedimenta*; and in Epirus of all other provinces brigandage is rampant. The sun was already high in the heavens when our cavalcade defiled through the streets of Yanina. The good townsfolk were just streaming out of church (for it was Sunday morning), in time to gape at our procession, which consisted of five zaptiehs or mounted police as escort, myself and another English traveller, two servants, a Circassian and an Albanian, and a tail of pack-animals and muleteers. We sallied out by the Prevesa and Arta road, and, as we rose over the first range of hills which bounds the Yanina plain to the south, we had a lovely view of the bright little capital of Epirus, its white houses gleaming amid the green foliage of many gardens, the dark walls of Ali Pasha's ruined castle projecting into the blue lake, the smooth waters studded with fleet sails, the little island where the revolted satrap was shot down in a Greek convent by the Turkish soldiery, the wall-like precipices of Mount Mytsekili, and far beyond, the delicately sculptured crest of the Pindus already capped with winter snows. Our track soon

diverged westward from the main road, and after climbing one or two steep ridges, we descended into the small secluded valley of Tcharakovista.

The site of Dodona was, until lately, a much-vexed question; and when Byron asked,

"Oh where, Dodona, is thine aged grove,
Prophetic fount and oracle divine?
What valley echoed the response of Jove?
What trace remaineth of the Thunderer's
shrine?"

there were none to answer him. But the excavations begun in the valley of Tcharakovista by M. Minyeko, a Polish engineer in the Ottoman service, and continued by M. Karapanos—the statues, inscriptions, and other relics unearthed by those gentlemen's exertions—have, it is generally admitted, finally settled the question, and the traveller who enters this peaceful little vale, knows that he is treading the same holy ground to which the pilgrims of Hellas wandered with pious steps three thousand years ago. Dodona was the earliest, as it was also the most venerable, of Hellenic sanctuaries. Long before the development of Greek polytheism, a national shrine existed there, embodying the primitive conception of the Divinity which created and maintained the universe. There it was that, at a later period, the Supreme Force which formed and ruled the world was personified in Zeus, who received as emblems the thunderbolts that shattered the crests of Mount Tomaros, the eagle that nested in its ravines, the oak that grew on

its flanks ; while the water which gushed out of its rocks to permeate and fertilise the soil, formed another of his attributes, and gave him the surname of Naïos. Then the productive earth was identified with Dione, the primitive spouse of Zeus ; and Love, the fructifying element in nature, was represented by Aphrodite, the daughter of Zeus and Dione, whose emblem was the dove, the sacred bird of Dodona ; while to the genius of Destruction and of Death were assigned the precipices of the southern slopes of the Tomaros, where the Acheron led through inaccessible ravines to the infernal regions. Little wonder that the shrine which thus embodied their faith in the higher powers that rule all things should have been the resort of Greeks from all parts of Hellas whenever issues of great moment were at hand. To the oracle of Dodona Inachus goes for advice when Io has related to him her dreams. The priestess of Dodona foretells to Io her relations with the father of the gods, and to Hercules the end of his labours. To Zeus Dodonaios Achilles appeals to protect his beloved Patroclus : to him Ulysses journeys to learn how he is to return to Ithaca. Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, consults his oracle ; and Pyrrhus, the son of Achilles, weds Larissa, the niece of Hercules, before his altars. Æneas and his Trojans, who have experienced in the fate of war the strong hand of the Greek gods, travel to Dodona to inquire where they are to found their new colony. Verily the shrine which thus sanctified the laws and actions of kings—which predicted the issues of wars, and gave counsel in all things, private and public—which informed the ideas and feelings of a primitive nation, and often maintained union where there was no bond of political unity,—may still be approached

in a spirit of reverence, even by those who would say with the French poet—

Je suis venu trop tard dans un monde
trop vieux,
Où d'un siècle sans foi naît un siècle sans
crainte.

But the days are now far away when from all towns of Greece offerings flowed in to the temple of Zeus amid the splendid pomp of a solemn ritual, and Demosthenes, addressing the representatives of Dodona, welcomed them as the ambassadors of a city which he esteemed of all cities the most blessed and the most beloved of the gods, for that Zeus Dodonaios and Dione and the Pythian Apollo spake through the mouth of its oracles, and showered their favours upon the town. There is little left, save confused heaps of stone, of these once world-famous temples. A massive wall of early Hellenic structure, however, still marks the limits of the town which grew up beside the sanctuary, and bushes of stunted ilex have taken the place of the sacred groves where pilgrims were wont to wander in a dim religious twilight. One monument alone has escaped the ravages of time and the fiercer hand of man. The theatre, where the Naïan games were celebrated in honour of Zeus and Dione, still remains in comparative preservation, one of the best specimens among similar relics of ancient Greece. It is built against a natural hollow in the hillside, just beyond the walls of the town, and its fifty rows of stone seats are supported on masses of carefully cut, uncemented stone-work. Hence the spectators could survey the temples and groves of the sanctuary, the lofty peaks of Mount Tomaros (now called Mount Olytzika), which still bears on its flanks black patches of oak forests, and through

the southern mouth of the valley the distant precipices which overhang the Acheron.

Time slips away too fast amid the memories of such a past, and when the captain of our escort warned us that, if we tarried longer, we should not reach our destination before nightfall, it was with a sigh of impatient regret that I mounted my horse and turned my back on the spot where Dodona was. We had taken letters of recommendation from a kind old Albanian Bey of Yanina, Djemal-ed-Din Agha, who owned several *chiftliks*, or farms, in this part of the country, and had hospitably insisted that we should make two of them, at least, our resting-places for the first and second night of the journey. We had to double back a little bit to the north, and follow the valley of Tcharakovista to its northern extremity in order to round the lofty heights of Mount Olytzika. The gorgeous tints of sunset faded into twilight while we crossed and recrossed the bed of a tortuous stream, which seemed to do duty for a highroad, and ere we reached the hill on which our *chiftlik* was perched it was already almost dark. Its name was *Eleutherokhoria*, or Free Village, but its freedom, like that of many others, had ceased in the days of Ali Pasha, and it was now the property of the Albanian Bey. The rising moon helped us to struggle, without too much stumbling, over the last piece of the road, and when we arrived on the small plateau at the summit of the hill, a bright fire flaming in the courtyard outside the house, and the grateful spectacle of a sheep impaled on a big wooden spit, announced that our arrival had been duly heralded, and becoming preparations made for the reception of the tired and hungry travellers. The headman of the farm came out

to welcome us, and we were soon comfortably installed with soft rugs, a blazing fire, and good substantial cheer.

Dawn was just breaking into daylight as we sallied forth the next morning from the *chiftlik*. It was one of those rare autumnal days when nature, arresting for a moment her process of annual decay, flings once more over the world her departing loveliness in exuberant defiance of the frosts and storms

“Which dreary winter leads
Out of his Scythian cave.”

From the summit of the knoll we could now survey the landscape which on our arrival was already wrapt in the gloom of fading twilight. Far away to the east the snow-capped peaks of the Pindus floated above a silver mist in a sea of rosy light. Straight in front of us, to the south, the frowning mass of Mount Olytzika rose gaunt and bleak out of a maze of blue hills and vales, wearing on its shoulders a purple mantle of dark forests, and on its brow a crown of burnished gold. To the west the jagged outline of the mountains of Suli, flushed with the warm embrace of the rising luminary, stood out in brilliant relief against the transparent heavens. But our route lay down in the valley, and we soon found ourselves shut out from the prospect of the distant mountains by two ranges of low wooded hills, the outworks of Olytzika and Suli, which ran along both sides of the valley. We were not, however, inclined to cavil at the change. The sun, as it rose higher in the sky, beat down upon us with scorching power, and the spreading plane-trees, which stretched their canopy of yellow foliage above our path beside a brawling torrent, afforded us grateful compensation for the

breezes we had left behind us on the heights, while there was food enough for the eyes in the gorgeous tints which clothed the wooded slopes around us. There was scarcely a village or a human being to be seen during the long day's ride. Only a ruined water-mill or a deserted *khan* showed here and there that the hand of man had once been busy in these regions. Once, through a break in the hills, we descried on the crest of a rocky bluff what looked like a Greek convent. I inquired of one of our *zaptiehs* what it was, and received the same everlasting answer, "*Harab dir.*" (It is a ruin). "What ruin?" "*Kim bilir!*" (Who knows!) We halted for our noonday meal under the shade of a giant oak-tree. "The tree," as it is called in the neighbourhood—for in this region, which was once covered with forests of oak, there is nothing left but brushwood, and the maple and poplar trees, which grow out of the exuberance of the soil wherever there is water to bathe their roots. Some superstitious reverence seemed to have saved this one relic of the ancient forests; but lightning, which knows not such fears, had shattered half its branches and seamed its colossal trunk, thirty-five feet in circumference. A few miles beyond it the valley gradually expanded. To our right towered above us the sheer cliffs of Suli, and on a projecting spur the white walls of the large fortress-looking *chiftlik* where we were to find our night's quarters. The barking of the deep-mouthed Molossian dogs, who, from afar, heralded our approach, broke gratefully on the desolate silence which had surrounded us throughout the day; and as we climbed the last slopes of the hill, the village of Romano itself came into view, among fields of maize just ripe for the reaper, and long tracts of rich brown land

furrowed by the plough. Here everything was once more informed with life. From the steep mountain alps above us, herds of cattle, returning to their night's quarters, were making music with their bells. Large flocks of sheep and goats were loitering on their way home, notwithstanding the guttural solicitations of Albanian shepherd boys. Even the dingy hovels of the peasantry were made bright with the red and blue dresses of the women and the harsh clatter of many voices. At the gate of the outer wall of the *chiftlik* our host stood ready to receive us. It was, indeed, more of a fortress than a farmhouse. A long wall, furnished with small round towers, and pierced with loopholes, surrounded the dwelling. Towards the mountain, whence alone it could be assailed, the house had nothing but blank walls, loopholed at every storey. All its windows, iron-barred, looked out on the valley, which the precipitous cliffs seemed absolutely to overhang. Thick walls of grey limestone, big rafters of solid timber, staircases of stone, were so many indications of the warlike forethought which had presided at its construction. It had belonged of old to a Suliote chieftain, and had been burnt out in the wars of extermination which Ali Pasha fought against the fierce mountaineers of Suli; but he had himself rebuilt it, and after his fall it had passed, with the rest of his enormous possessions, to the Sultans, who had sold it to Djemaled-Din Agha's father. The whole of the population had disappeared, either killed or in flight, but the new owners imported fresh labourers, Albanians from Konitza and Greeks from the plain of Yanina, and succeeded, in the course of time, in restoring some measure of prosperity to this desolated district. Fresh villages had sprung up out of

the ruins of the old ones ; and our host, a younger son of Djemal-ed-Din Agha, who had been for fifteen years in charge of the property, told us with no small pride, which was not unwarranted, that he had now three hundred families on these estates. The young squire certainly did not look like the son of a wealthy land-owner who could count his revenues by thousands. His somewhat ragged clothes, in spite of their Frankish build, and more still, his hard rough hands and bronzed complexion, told us plainly enough what he himself repeated in words—"I am a labourer amongst labourers;" but there was still about him that unassuming dignity and quiet grace which are the distinctive features of a Mussulman gentleman. And as its master, so was the house. It was the home not of luxury, but of work. The large compact building was almost entirely devoted to the requirements of the farm. There were scarcely any outhouses, with the exception of a large roomy stable. Everything was stowed away in the central block ; granaries, store-rooms, a large hall for the retainers, took up three-fourths of the available space, leaving only a small wing for the squire and his family, and the *selamlık*, or guests' room. The latter was neither spacious nor luxurious, its sole furniture consisting of a tattered carpet, and a long divan which ran round three sides of it and was covered with a faded chintz. But nature made up for these deficiencies by the glorious prospect which the windows commanded over valley and mountain. Opposite to us was the massive ridge of Mount Olytzika, more naked and more precipitous even on this side than towards Dodona, while on its flanks the outline of the rugged range of Suli was cut out in sharply projected shadows.

Out of a deep depression in the chain, the silver streak of the Acheron could be seen rushing headlong into the deep valley beneath us, whence the blue smoke of many a hamlet rose in wreathed columns out of the evening mist. The sound of song and laughter from the courtyard in front of the house announced the preparations for our dinner. A huge fire of dried branches was blazing against the wall ; and by the side, just out of reach of flame and smoke, the customary sheep was being roasted on a wooden spit, flanked by two turkeys, impaled according to the same fashion. Three stalwart cooks superintended the operation, while the rest of the retainers crouched about the court, watching with interested curiosity the preparations for the unwonted feast. Now and then one or other of them would spring forward to relieve one of the officiating trio, who were themselves in no little danger of being roasted with their charge ; but the spit never ceased to revolve, keeping time with the rhythmical chant of the assembly. The glare of the fire played fitfully on their dark, sharply-cut faces and flowing hair ; it gleamed on the bright weapons which stuck out of their belts ; it glowed on their grey cloaks and *fustanellas*, and cast grotesque shadows on the walls, to the great delight of a deaf and dumb "simple," who vainly addressed them with eloquent gesticulations. He was a cousin of the house, and its spoiled child ; his wayward antics seemed to provoke rather reverence than laughter ; for is it not written, "Blessed are the poor of spirit" ? and did not Mohammed himself say, "Such as these ye shall treat like children ; for verily they are God's own children" ? But the most interesting part of the dinner—viz., the preparing of it—was

terminated ; and after the tamer, if not less necessary, process of consuming our substantial meal was over, mattresses and blankets were speedily produced, and we were left to our dreams, even before the fumes of the banquet had vanished from the walls of our apartment.

The next morning we were again off betimes ; for we had a long and steep climb before us. We struck straight up the hills behind Romano, and the goat-track which we followed soon became so precipitous that we were fain to dismount, and leave our horses to struggle as best they could over the slippery rocks of shelving limestone ; nor were we able to ride any more that day. If the ascent was sharp, it was at least rapid ; and after clambering for three hours over rugged cliffs, and through thick underwood, we found ourselves on the sharp knife-like crest of Suli, nearly 4000 feet above the level of the sea. The western face of the chain looked even more precipitous than the slopes we had just scaled : there was scarcely the trace of a track to be seen—only the ruined homes of Kako-Suli, on a projecting ledge, some 2000 feet below us,—the long line of castellated rocks overhanging the gorges of the Cocytus and the Acheron, which were once the strongholds of the Suliotes, and the Turkish fort, which still mounts guard over their ruins,—marked our destination. Whether we had missed the proper track, I know not ; but as we scrambled down the steep ridge, and our horses and pack-animals stumbled, and tumbled, and groaned over the sharp rocks and treacherous brambles which concealed their pitfalls, I was forcibly brought to the conclusion that when Virgil wrote "*Facilis descensus Averni,*" the poet delivered himself of an exceedingly misleading assertion.

There were, however, no bones broken ; and after a couple of hours of anything but facile descent, we were safely landed on the small mountain plateau where the "ghost of freedom haunts" the silent ruins of ill-fated Suli. Dismantled, fire-scarred walls alone mark its once prosperous homesteads ; but the terror of its name still lives in the popular legends. When I proposed to pitch our tents for the night amid its ruins, there was one cry of horror from guards and muleteers, "Did I not know that every night the spirits of its last defenders hover about the air, making the dark hours hideous with wild war-songs and lamentations ; and that no mortal can hear the fierce shriek with which they vanish at the first break of dawn, without dying ? Had not old Dimitri, the miller, been wandering about the hills with scattered senses ever since the night when the storm drove him to take refuge under Suli's accursed walls ? *Olmaz, Effendim ! Olmaz !* It cannot be !" There was no overcoming their stubborn fear ; and so we made for the Turkish fort, where at least I could depend upon a hospitable reception. Alas ! Mr Gladstone's policy had wrought its effects even in these secluded regions. At the gate of the castle, the captain in command of the 100 men who form its garrison met us with deep protestations of regret that, three days ago, he had received stringent orders from the military authorities not to allow any strangers within the precincts of his fortress. "We had a *Bougourouldu* from the Governor-general of Yanina. He was ready to kiss the Vali Pasha's seal ; but unfortunately he was an officer, and could only obey the orders of the military authorities. Orders were orders ; and however profoundly pained to deny us ingress

into his own house, *Olmaz, Effen-dim! Olmaz!* It cannot be!" However, at the foot of the castle-hill there were two hovels, which we had passed on our way up, and where, we were told, there lived the descendants of the only Suliote family which had been spared from the national destruction; and there we might hope to find food and shelter from the storm, which was already gathering about the Ridge of Lightning, as the highest ridge of Suli is called. But before retracing our steps, we had to perform our pilgrimage to the ruins of the fort where the last and most terrible scene of the Suliote tragedy was enacted.

The Suliotes were a hardy race of Christian Albanian highlanders, who, by their warlike prowess, maintained during the last century undisputed supremacy in these mountain fastnesses, and often carried terror down into the plains, as far as the sea on one side and the gates of Yanina on the other. Ali Pasha, the famous tyrant of Epirus, after breaking the power of the feudal chieftains of Albania, turned his might against the handful of bold warrior peasants, whose very independence was in his eyes a sufficient offence. But for fifteen years they defied his attacks, and many a time was the proud Pasha compelled to fall back defeated from their inaccessible heights. Where brute force had failed, diplomacy in its most usual oriental form, viz., bribery, prevailed. George Botzaris, the most able and powerful of the Suliote chieftains, was bought over, and a fresh campaign planned by the traitor himself, led slowly but surely to the final catastrophe. Though the Suliotes were never numerous (at the zenith of their power they could not muster more than 3000 fighting men), the small highland plateau of Kako-

Suli was incapable of providing for their wants. Ali Pasha, instead of hurling his strength in vain assaults on their natural strongholds, simply blockaded them within the narrow limits of their barren mountain home. Cut off from the plains which they had been wont to harry at will, the Suliotes were reduced to the severest straits, and disaffection began to make ravages amongst their ranks. The clan which held the northern key to their position deserted bodily to the enemy; and gold, which had laid the foundations of their fall, was once more used successfully by Ali Pasha to gain ingress into Kako-Suli. A certain Pylios Gusi introduced the Pasha's troops under cover of the night into his house, and the next morning Kako-Suli was in their hands. Desperate, but undaunted, the Suliotes threw themselves back upon their last retrenchments. To prolong the resistance of the remainder, a large body of them cut their way through to Parga, and thence sought refuge in Greece, where they lived to pay off their vengeance tenfold on the Turks during the War of Independence. The last band of defenders held the fort where we were now standing: in front of them every coign of vantage occupied by Ali's victorious troops, behind them the sheer precipices of the Acheron. Their position was hopeless; but the fierce eloquence of Samuel, the warrior monk, inflamed their heroism, and when the worst came to the worst they preferred destruction to surrender. As the Pasha's soldiery scaled the last Suliote stronghold, Samuel and his devoted band retired slowly before them, fighting inch by inch; and when the last retrenchment had been stormed by sheer weight of numbers, a fearful explosion involved in the same ruin both victors and vanquished.

Samuel had with his own hand laid the lighted match to the powder-magazine. Meanwhile the Suliote women had escaped on to the rocks which overhang the Acheron; and when the report of the explosion announced the final disaster, it is told that they raised their voices in a last chant of desperate triumph, and taking their children in their arms, flung themselves headlong over the precipice into the dark waters of the River of Death.

Seventy-seven years have passed since this awful tragedy was consummated, and a few blackened vaults overgrown with wild mountain shrubs alone mark these scenes of woe. *Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.* The shrill note of a bird of prey, or the harsh voice of the sentinel on the battlements of the Turkish fortress, alone disturbs the peace which nature sheds over the theatre of man's worst as well as noblest deeds. The calm of evening rested on the wide and varied landscape unrolled before our eyes. To the left of the southern chain of Suli, which rose immediately opposite to us, separated from the central ridge only by the deep chasm of the Acheron, lay the broad Ambracian Gulf backed by the distant peaks of Acarnania, and to its right the placid waters of the Adriatic, with Paxos and Antipaxos reposing on their bosom. But behind us heavy storm-clouds had enveloped the higher ridge of Suli, and the muttering of thunder bade us hie back to our night's quarters.

Nor did these turn out so comfortable as might have been expected from their external appearance; and besides, was not the fact of sleeping under the roof of the last of the Suliotes worth some slight measure of discomfort? How they had managed to escape the destruction which had overtaken the rest of their race was a question to which I failed to

elicit a satisfactory reply. The three men who with their families tenanted the two small cabins, were the sons of two Suliote brothers who had borne a part in the tragical events of 1803, though what that part exactly was, they seemed either unable or unwilling to tell. All they knew, they said, was that their fathers rendered a great service to Ali Pasha; and that when the final catastrophe came, their lives, and those of a few women and children who had sought refuge in their house, were spared by the conqueror. They themselves had wedded their cousins, for Providence had kindly provided that each of the children of one of the original survivors could be mated with one of the other's children, and the numerous offspring with which the various couples had already been blessed, allowed one to hope that the race might yet sprout up to new and vigorous life. Though remnants of the Suliotes are still to be found scattered about the Peloponnesus and other parts of the Hellenic kingdom, they have lost by inter-marriage with others that purity of breed which, it is said, enabled them to preserve down into modern times the perfect beauty of the Grecian type. And certainly both men and women in these humble hovels were worthy of their ancestors' high renown; the men, tall and powerfully built, with strongly marked faces, in which the deep lines and weather-beaten complexion, and shaggy beards and long dishevelled hair, rather enhanced than marred the bold sharply defined features. The women, more worn even than the men by toil and hardships, still bore witness to their high descent; and one young girl, who had only been recently married to the youngest of the three brothers, might well have stood for Milo's Venus, whether you looked at the graceful athletic figure, the delicate joints

of hands and feet, the swelling bosom, the slope of the shoulders, and the small perfectly poised head, or at the classical features of the oval face. Nor were these charms unbecomingly set off by the peasant girl's simple dress: a small red fez, secured by a plait of hair wound round it, and fastened with a silver pin; a bodice of coarse blue cloth trimmed with red embroidered work, and a short petticoat of the same stuff, open down the front, but covered with a red apron, and leggings of quaint-coloured worsted down to the ankles. It was a curious group that gathered round the large blazing hearth, while the wind and storm were beating against the mountain-side. In the corner an old woman in her dotage, the grand-aunt of the family, who had witnessed with her own eyes the days of the "great trouble;" beside her five small children, confused bundles of picturesque rags, with bright eager faces and curly heads; and crouching opposite to the fire, while their wives stood spinning behind them, the three fierce-looking highlanders, whose eyes gleamed with the double light of the reflected flames and their own enthusiasm, as they recalled for the strangers' benefit the memories of bygone times when their fathers were the lords of the soil which they now tilled as hired bondsmen: and when the wind howled more wildly, or the thunder crashed more loudly, they would stop for a moment to cross themselves devoutly, and mutter a prayer for the souls of the Suliotes "who were about." Presently, when the storm lulled, all the grown-up members of the family retired to the other cabin, where our guards and muleteers were warding off the "ghosts" by uproarious song, and we were left to share the room with the children and

the old crone, who never ceased all through the night to moan whenever a fresh gust of wind whistled through the rafters of the roof.

In the morning the sky was once more bright and clear, and the big rain-drops on the trees and the brawling of the swollen torrents were the only signs left of the fury of the storm. A steep and slippery zigzag down the wooded slopes of the hill soon brought us to the dark ravine of the Achéron. The stream has carved itself a deep bed through the limestone rock which, gleaming through its pellucid waters, imparts to them a peculiar whiteness. On either side lofty cliffs tower over the water-course,—on the one side the precipice down which the Suliote women took their heroic leap into eternity, on the other the bulwarks of the southern range of Suli, which stretches away almost as far as Prevesa. Dark gnarled oaks growing out of every fissure in the rock, project their spreading branches above the stream, and cast over it a gloom which even the rays of a vertical sun can scarcely dispel. A little further on another torrent descends from the northern hills of Suli, and the two rivers of Hell, mingling their accursed waters, disappear in a wild gorge whence we could hear the roaring of a distant waterfall. Our track lay over the wooded ridge above it, and for more than an hour we toiled painfully through a tangled forest of oaks, and ilex, and arbutus, and wild mulberry, twined and intertwined with countless wreaths of luxuriant creepers, and bright with the rich clusters of their berries:—

" . . . Arbuteos fetus, montanaque
 fraga
 Cornaque et in duris hærentia mora
 rubetis
 Et quæ deciderant patula Jovis arbore
 glandes."

On emerging from this almost virgin forest we found ourselves on the brow of a cliff overhanging the plain. For beneath us the Acheron, issuing triumphantly from the precipices of Suli, flowed with majestic dignity across the lowlands towards the distant haven of Glykys Limen, where its waters sweeten the briny sea. Down the face of this cliff we now had to descend. The prospect was not inviting. It was to all appearances a sheer wall of rock, with here and there a patch of brushwood or a mass of loose rubble clinging to its interstices. But our guide said it was the Sultan's road, and people had travelled over it for generations, though, as he added in the same breath that he never recollected pack-horses having crossed the mountains of Suli, the latter statement somewhat detracted from the strength of his argument. We had, however, no option in the matter. So the zaptiehs' clever ponies showed the way, jumping like goats from ledge to ledge; then our own horses were driven down; and behind them, at a safe distance to prevent collisions, the pack-animals slipped and slid and stumbled, a zaptieh or a muleteer clinging on desperately to their tails and thus acting as a kind of break,—and finally all the beasts were safely landed on a little plateau, beyond which the descent became less precipitous. Having watched the exciting operation from the top, we proceeded to rejoin our caravan; and though we too had often to transform ourselves temporarily from bipeds into quadrupeds, the *mauvais pas* was finally got over without accidents—but I shall always recollect that last bit of the descent from Suli as one of the most break-neck samples of Imperial Ottoman roads which ever came within my varied experience of Eastern travel.

Near the village of Ghlyky, which seems to have usurped the name of the ancient harbour at the mouth of the river, there are still some scattered ruins of the oracle where the Greeks in the time of Herodotus used to call upon departed spirits, and even to this day the gloomy gorge of the Acheron is associated in the legends of the Greek peasantry with the dark kingdom of the dead. Although it is only a day's ride from Kako-Suli to Parga, we determined to break the journey in order to give our horses a rest after the feats of equilibrium they had been called upon to perform during the last two days; and we took up our quarters in the large Albanian village of Turcopaluro, which is built on a slight eminence out of the marshy plain. Here my faith in my Greek friends of Yanina, who had assured me that south of the Kalamas there were no Albanian communities whom at least the bond of a common tongue did not unite to Greece, was first shaken. My hosts up at Suli had spoken Greek as well as Albanian, and even knew Turkish, probably owing to their intercourse with the garrison of the fort. But here was a village, and a Christian village, where, with the exception of the priest, not a soul either spoke or understood a word of anything but Albanian. Nor, if our Albanian servant could be trusted as an interpreter, had their sympathies any more affinity to Greece than their language. Their village was the property of an Albanian Mussulman Bey, who had never been near the place, and seemed to let his peasantry do very much what they pleased. Most of them were armed; and the pride with which they mentioned that they were allowed to bear arms while the Greek peasantry to the south were not, showed how vastly superior they considered

themselves to a race which could perhaps read and write, but could never fight.

The road to Parga led over a succession of low undulating hills covered with the thick-set bushes of the prickly palluria, and there was nothing to relieve its monotony save the flocks and tents of a few Wal-lach winter settlements, until we reached the coast. Suddenly, as we arrived on the brow of a long ridge somewhat higher than the rest, the Adriatic came into view, its blue waters lapping lazily against the grey cliffs, while the land, sloping gently down towards them, was covered with well-tilled fields and groves of dark olive-trees. Close to a ruined old watch-tower stood a handsome new *chiflik* belonging to Abeddin Pasha, the ex-Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, who, together with his brothers, owns a large amount of property in the Albanian districts of Epirus. Gradually, as we approach Parga, the cultivation grew more and more luxuriant; the gnarled olive-trees, symmetrically planted on carefully laid out terraces, formed a thick forest on either side of the path; and when we debouched out of it on to the beach, we found ourselves in a small, almost land-locked bay, with the town of Parga immediately facing us. A rocky island, which bears the ruins of a convent and of a fort, encloses the bay to the south. At the northern extremity of its outlet a lofty promontory, crowned by the Turkish citadel, projects into the sea; while the town, backed on all sides by green orchards, runs up the slopes of the amphitheatre of wooded hills which protect it from the chill blasts of the north and east. Parga has had a checkered history. It was the last of the Venetian settlements on the coast of Albania, and passed, with the other possessions of the

republic, into the hands of France when Napoleon discrowned the Queen of the Seas. An inscription on the guard-house of the small island-fort—"Pour la defence (*sic*) de la patrie, 1808"—still recalls the memory of the French garrison which at that time held it. In 1814 the British squadron which was blockading Corfu landed an expedition on the coast, which, with the connivance of the inhabitants, secured the fortress by a bold *coup de main*. But it was fated to be an evil hour for the Pargiotes when the British flag replaced the tricolor on the battlements of their citadel. While diplomacy was busy in remodelling the map of Europe at the Congress of Vienna, the little seaport on the coast of Albania seems to have escaped the memory of the British statesmen; and when Turkey, invoking the silence of treaties with regard to Parga, claimed its restitution as forming part of the mainland possessions which were to be restored to her, King George's Government could find no answer but compliance; and the Governor of the Ionian Islands received orders to withdraw the garrison, and hand over the ill-fated town to its most inveterate foe, Ali Pasha, the tyrant of Yanina and the destroyer of Suli. No words of mine can render more vividly than Sir A. Alison's account, the pathetic circumstances which accompanied its surrender.

"When it was rumoured, after the Treaty of 1815, that Parga was to be ceded to the Turks, the inhabitants testified the utmost alarm, and, justly apprehensive of the consequences of being ceded to the Sultan's dreaded satrap, they made an urgent application to the British officer in command of the garrison, who, by order of Sir Thomas Maitland, then Governor of the Ionian Islands, returned an answer in which he pledged himself that the place should not be yielded until the

property of those who might choose to emigrate should be paid for, and they themselves be transported to the Ionian Islands. An estimate was then made out of the property of the inhabitants, which was found to amount in value to nearly £500,000, and the inhabitants were individually brought up before the Governor and interrogated whether they would remain or emigrate; but they unanimously returned for answer that 'they were resolved to abandon their country rather than stay in it with dishonour, and that they would disinter and carry with them the bones of their forefathers.' Commissioners had been appointed to fix the amount of the compensation which was to be awarded by the Turkish Government to such of the inhabitants of Parga as chose to emigrate; but they, as might have been expected, differed widely as to its amount, and in the end not more than a third of the real value was awarded. Meanwhile, Ali Pasha, little accustomed to have his demands thwarted, and impatient of delay, repeatedly threatened to assault the town and reunite it to his pashalic without paying one farthing of the stipulated indemnity. At length, in June 1819, the compensation was fixed at £142,425, and Sir Frederic Adam gave notice to the inhabitants that he was ready to provide for their embarkation. The scene which ensued was of the most heartrending description, and forcibly recalled the corresponding events in ancient times, of which the genius of antiquity has left such moving pictures. As soon as the notice was given, every family marched solemnly out of its dwelling without tears or lamentation; and the men, preceded by their priests and followed by their sons, proceeded to the sepulchres of their fathers, and silently unearthed and collected their remains, which they put upon a huge pile of wood which they had previously collected in front of one of their churches. They then took their arms in their hands, and, setting fire to the pile, stood motionless and silent around it till the whole was consumed. During this melancholy ceremony, some of Ali's

troops, impatient for possession, approached the gates of the town, upon which a deputation of the citizens was sent to inform the English governor that if a single infidel was admitted before the remains of their ancestors were secured from profanation, and themselves with their families safely embarked, they would instantly put to death their wives and children, and die with their arms in their hands, after having taken a bloody revenge on those who had bought and sold their country. The remonstrance was successful; the march of the Mussulmans was arrested, the pile burnt out, and the people embarked in silence with their wives and children."*

For many years after these tragical events, Parga was a wilderness—even its conquerors were afraid to settle in its desolate houses, haunted by the ghosts of the past. But when the war of independence drove many of the Mussulman inhabitants out of the Morea, the Turkish Government gave the refugees grants of land about Parga, and gradually the new colonists were joined by people from the interior who were attracted by the fertility of the soil, and some even of the families who had emigrated to the Ionian Islands were at last induced to return to their former homes. Nowadays there are scarcely any traces left of that romantic episode in the history of Parga, save the English broad-arrow on some of the guns of the citadel. The population, which is composed in almost equal parts of Mussulmans and Christians, lives in good-tempered amity. Trade is prosperous; and though nature has denied Parga the one thing which would have made it entirely blessed—viz., a harbour—small Greek and Italian craft run into its sheltered bay, and convey the fragrant fruits of its lemon and orange groves, and

* Alison's History of Europe, 1815-1852.

its plenteous cargoes of olives, to Paxos, whence the Austrian steamers carry them to Trieste and Brindisi, and the markets of central and southern Europe. Among the produce of Parga there is one speciality which is held in high estimation by the Polish Jews: it is a species of sweet lemon which is prepared and candied in a peculiar way for their markets, and so great is the demand for it at the time of the Passover feasts, that, when the crop is deficient, it commands the most fabulous prices. Its flavour is perhaps more delicate than that of other species, but I confess I was unable to discover what peculiar excellency it possessed.

The castle is a picturesque Venetian fortress with straggling walls running up the hillside, but can scarcely possess at the present day any strategical value. I was, however, able to judge of it only from the outside, as here again the officer in command met me with the same *non possumus* as at Suli. By a strange coincidence, he too had received a few days before stringent orders from Yanina not to allow any travellers within the walls of his stronghold.

From Parga I determined to visit the mountain district of the Tchamouria—a region almost exclusively held by Mussulman Albanians, and where the information I had received at Yanina left me little doubt that a strong and genuine agitation was in progress against Greek annexation. Bidding farewell to the bright little town of Parga, we turned once more into the thick groves of olive-trees which we had crossed on our way from Suli; but about three-quarters of an hour from the shore, we struck northwards over the hills, and soon found ourselves once more among bleak and rugged uplands. A narrow defile between limestone rocks

leads into the plain of Margariti, a fertile table-land locked in on all sides by hills, which is the heart of the Tchamouria, though on most maps the latter name is given to a district south of the Acheron, between that river and Prevesa. The mistake is much the same as if geographers applied the name of British Isles exclusively to the Channel Islands. The limits of the Albanian-speaking districts of Epirus south of the Kalamas may be roughly defined as follows:—Starting from the Kalamas near the sharp bend which that river takes to the north at the foot of Mount Lubinitza, they follow the crest of the amphitheatrical range of Suli as far as the gorge of the Acheron. In that neighbourhood, probably owing to the influence which the Suliote tribe at one time enjoyed, they drop over to the east into the valley of the Luro, and follow its basin as far as the peninsula on which Prevesa is situated, where the Greek element resumes its preponderancy. Within these outer limits of the Albanian tongue the Greek element is not unrepresented, and in some places, as about Paramythia, for instance, it predominates; but, on the whole, the above-defined region may be looked upon as essentially Albanian. In this, again, there is an inner triangle which is purely Albanian—viz., that which lies between the sea and the Kalamas on the one hand, and the waters of the Vuvo on the other. With the exception of Parga and one or two small hamlets along the shore, and a few Greek *chiftgis* on Albanian estates, the inhabitants of this country are pure Tchamis—a name which, notwithstanding Von Hahn's more elaborate interpretation, I am inclined to derive simply from the ancient appellation of the Kalamas, the Thyamis, on both banks of

which stream the Albanian tribe of the Tchamis, itself a subdivision of the Tosks, has been settled from times immemorial. From the mountain fastnesses which enclose this inner triangle, the Tchamis spread out and extended their influence east and south; and the name of Tchamouria, which is especially applied to the southernmost Albanian settlements in Epirus, was probably given to that district by themselves as an emphatic monument of their supremacy; but it cannot belong less rightfully to the centre, where they hold undivided sway.

The slopes of the hills which surrounded the oblong plateau, at the southern extremity of which we were now standing, were dotted about with numerous villages, and on the eastern side the slender minarets of Margariti were conspicuous amidst masses of green foliage and the square flat roofs of massive fortress-like houses. Margariti is the capital of the district, though it is scarcely larger than Mazaraki, the highest houses of which could be descried above an intervening spur at the northern end of the valley. An hour's ride along the foot of the eastern hills brought us right up to Margariti. Our visit proved to be singularly well-timed, for — Pasha, the Governor of —, himself one of the most active promoters of the League in Epirus, had arrived on the preceding day to superintend the enrolment of the Redifs, or first ban of the reserves, who had just been called under arms. Moreover, it was the first day of Baïram, and the whole population had turned out in holiday attire to celebrate this doubly auspicious occasion. Groups of tall, handsome mountaineers, decked out in clean *fustanellas* and gorgeous embroidered jackets, were loitering about the

streets; and their proud bearing, more even than the weapons which bristled in their belts, showed clearly that we were among an eminently warlike race. The arrival of two foreigners only added to the excitement which was visible in every face; and we were soon surrounded by self-constituted guides, who volunteered to lead us to the Pasha's residence. As we were already old acquaintances, our reception was most cordial. Quarters were soon found for us in one of the few Christian houses of the place; and we received a pressing invitation to be present at a great demonstration which was to come off on the following day at Mazaraki.

While our Christian host was preparing the evening banquet, we strolled about the quaint little town, which counts nearly 4000 inhabitants, of which only a small fraction are Christians. It is built in an amphitheatre formed by two spurs which project out of the main ridge westwards into the plain. The principal portion of the town—*i.e.*, the bazaars and the houses of the lower classes—lies in the hollow, while the residences of the wealthier citizens and *beys* occupy the hill-slopes. The summit of the steep bluff to the south is crowned by an imposing castle, built by Ali Pasha to check the bold mountaineers, whom he never succeeded in completely subduing. The grey walls of the solid stone houses, square and massive, would form a somewhat monotonous *ensemble*, were they not relieved by the luxuriant and varied tints of poplar, chestnut, and walnut trees, and the picturesque domes and minarets of the mosques. The bazaars were closed on account of the festival; but as there is no local industry in this district, they were scarcely likely to present any fea-

tures of special interest, for the wants of the people whom they supply are of the simplest order. When we returned to our quarters, there was, however, alas! no supper ready. An Eastern host would rather keep his guests starving than serve them a modest but hasty meal, which would not, in his opinion, do credit to his hospitality. But coffee and cigarettes, and cigarettes and *raki*, combined with the garrulousness of Mr Triantaphilos himself, helped to while away the time. Although a Christian and a Greek, and in a town where the Mussulman Albanian element was supreme, Mr Triantaphilos seemed to have little to complain of, either for himself or his community. His leanings towards Hellenism were eminently Platonic, his chief anxiety appearing to be lest a war should invalidate his contracts with the Government; while, on the other hand, he seemed convinced that the Greeks could never make him more than he already was—viz., a member of the Municipal Council,—a proud position, upon which he did not fail to lay proper stress. At length the repast appeared, and it certainly justified the long waiting. Besides the inevitable sheep, fowls, turkeys, geese passed successively through the indefatigable carver's fingers; I say fingers advisedly—fortho'ugh knives and forks were provided for the European guests, mine host evidently never dreamed that they could be used for the purpose of carving.

The first part of the programme the next day was to attend the Pasha's levee. In the corner of a large and lofty room, the only adornment of which consisted in the brilliant carpets which lined three-quarters of the floor, and the delicate woodwork of the panels and painted ceiling, his Excellen-

cy squatted *more Turcorum* on a heap of rugs. We took up our places beside him, and soon saw apparently the whole male population of Margariti defile before us,—Imaums and Kadis with green turbans and flowing *kaftans*, Ulemas with white turbans, and Albanians of every rank and class, differentiated only by the fulness of their starched petticoats, the brilliancy of their jackets, and the gorgeousness of their belts, into which daggers and pistols were stuck with indiscriminate profusion. But to detect the rank of every visitor, it was only necessary to watch the Pasha. Himself an Albanian of these parts, and the owner of large estates in the Tchamouria, he was evidently versed in the jealous rules of local etiquette, and according to the standing of every guest he modified his greeting, now saluting them only with a faint motion of the hand to heart, lips, and forehead, now rising on one knee to perform the salutation, now on both, and now again standing full upright to welcome some personage of transcendent distinction. The code of etiquette is rigid in all parts of the East, but nowhere more so than in Albania. The reason for this is not far to seek—it lies in the fundamental constitution of Albanian society. It is a society made up of castes. In Northern Albania, where clan distinctions are more strongly marked, especially among the Christian tribes, the distinction of castes has been slightly overshadowed by the more obvious features of the clan system; but it exists throughout Albania, and is pre-eminent among the Tchamis. The highest of these castes is that of the warriors, who are at the same time the landowners; next to them rank the artisans and traders; then the shepherds; and lastly the husbandmen. At the

first blush it might appear that this classification was arbitrary, as there are many among the smaller arm-bearing landowners who till their own soil, while others combine trading with farming; and among the shepherds and the husbandmen the larger majority also carry arms, and are only too prone to lay aside the crook or the plough in favour of the rifle or the lance. But this objection is merely superficial. Every man's caste is determined by his chief avocation. The warrior-landlord does not cease to be the warrior-landlord because he takes a share in the labours of his peasantry or sells the produce of his estates; but the artisan and the shepherd and the husbandman do not rise out of their respective castes because they are always ready to follow their leaders on the war-path. The chief proofs that this rigid distinction exists are furnished by the two undisputed facts that professions in Albania are hereditary, and that marriage is limited almost exclusively between families of the same profession. The landowner's sons inherit his estates; if he have no male issue, his eldest daughter's husband, or, if female issue also fail, then the next male of kin. The artisan's son is an artisan, and so on. No Albanian would ever think of changing his own calling or of bringing his children up to another calling than his own. In like manner with regard to marriages. A squire's son marries a squire's daughter; he would no more wed an artisan's, than an artisan would give his daughter to a shepherd or a tiller of the soil. The line is sharply defined; none would ever dream of overstepping it. It has been thus drawn for ages, and in the Albanian's eyes it requires no other sanction. These four castes may crystallise into different social masses according to local custom.

In the north and centre, especially among the Christian Albanians, the clan formation prevails; in other parts—about Scutari, Elbassan, and Berat, for instance—small confederacies have formed themselves around the large towns which rule them through their landed aristocracy; in the south, with which we are more especially concerned, the Albanians group themselves around the leading families, their relations with those families resembling sometimes those of feudal retainers, sometimes those of Roman clients. But whatever the social agglomerate may be, those four distinct factors invariably enter into its composition. The same hard and fast laws which govern the relations of the castes with each other within the social group which they compose, equally govern their relations with the corresponding castes of other groups. Though as a rule there is little intimate intercourse between the different groups, still there is nothing to prevent a shepherd of the north marrying a shepherd's daughter of the south; but it would be just as unbecoming for a squire from Scutari to wed an artisan's daughter from the Tchamouria, as to contract a *mésalliance* in his own native town. It is on the universality of these caste distinctions throughout Albania, that the leaders of the Albanian movement found their hopes of welding the nation into a single homogeneous mass. The grouping of clans, confederacies, and families (families in the more comprehensive sense of the word, including retainers and clients), is, according to them, a mere adventitious and secondary formation. The elementary formation upon which the whole social structure rests, is the division of castes, and that is common to all Albania.

The levee ended, we mounted our horses and rode over the plain,

rounding the spur which is projected into it from the western ridge of hills, towards Mazaraki, where a great gathering of the Tchamis had been convoked. The careful cultivation of the soil, and the number of villages clustering on the slopes of the mountains, showed how populous this district is. Most of the notables of Margariti accompanied the Pasha, mounted on every variety of horse and mule; even the modest donkey was not unrepresented in the cavalcade, which glittered in the sunshine with the rainbow tints of oriental dress. Some hundred bold mountaineers on foot careered merrily in front of us, uttering wild war-whoops, and discharging in the air their bell-mouthed pistols and ancient matchlocks with interminable barrels. After a couple of hours' smart riding, we reached the meadow where the demonstration was to take place. It was indeed a striking spectacle. Not less than 2000 Albanians had responded to the call. As we took up our places on the carpets which had been spread for the Pasha's party under the shadowing branches of an olive-grove which fringed two sides of the meadow, the whole assemblage rose to their feet and saluted their leader with a long low shout. The scene was one of surpassing solemnity. The picturesque groups of mountaineers, their red caps and white *fustanellas* contrasting with the green meadow, their strange uncouth weapons gleaming in the sunshine, the grey houses of Mazaraki nestling among trees on the slopes of the western hills, the wooded heights behind them, and in the background distant ranges of blue mountains rising tier above tier against the brilliant sky. Our host rose in response to the acclamations of the meeting, no longer the stolid Turkish Pasha, but the en-

thusiastic patriot; and as the winged words flew from his lips, he seemed to breathe his very soul into the assembled multitude, until, when the closing sentence fell upon them, every man took it up and repeated it with the full power of two thousand healthy lungs, "Long live the autonomy of Albania!" Then came a striking incident. Among the mountaineers gathered on the meadow, there were many who belonged to villages and families between whom there existed ancient feuds. Solemnly these bitter foes of yesterday walked up towards the Pasha and bound themselves over, with the kiss of peace, to abjure their quarrels for evermore, in view of the national peril. Such a thing has never been seen, the Pasha told me, within the memory of man. "And look there," he added, pointing to a small knot of mountaineers—"those are Christians. Hitherto they have always held aloof from their Mussulman neighbours, but to-day they have come unsolicited to join in the common demonstration. There are not many Christians in the Tchamouria, but when arms are distributed, I shall give them with the same confidence to Boutro (Peter) as to Ahmed. For, mind you, it is not with those old matchlocks that they can fight the Greeks, however brave and fearless they may be. The gist of my speech was that the nation was in danger, and that I had come to supply them with arms and organise their resistance, that they might defend the liberties of a united and independent Albania."

In the evening we were the Pasha's guests, and after supper he entered at great length into the scope and signification of the Albanian movement, and fully confirmed what I had gathered of its bearing from the members of the League in Yanina. In Europe it

was the habit to denounce the League as the mere docile instrument of Turkish hostility towards Greece. The Albanians, however, were neither hostile to Greece nor slaves to Turkey. They did not forget that many of their own kith and kin had bled for Greece during the war of independence, and that at the present day the King of Greece counted 200,000 Albanians among his subjects. Nor did even the Mussulmans, who were bound to Turkey by the bond of a common religion, forget that it was only by dint of fighting that their fathers and forefathers had conquered from the Sultans the privileges which they were still allowed to enjoy. They claimed at the present day, when the voice of every nationality in the East was being heard, that theirs also should be listened to. They were determined not to allow themselves to be absorbed either by Greece or by Turkey. The watchword of the hour was the provinces of the Balkans for the nationalities of the Balkans, and the Albanians had taken it up in order to assert the right of the Albanians to Albania. If Greece refused to recognise that right, so much the worse for Greece. If Turkey refused to acknowledge it, so much the worse for Turkey. Nature had been a stern mother to Albania, but she had at least given the Albanians stout hearts and strong sinews to fight their own battles, and those were in future the only battles which they would fight. The Tchamis south of the Kalamas were a small and insignificant tribe, four or five times outnumbered by the Greeks of Southern Epirus, and it might be contended that so trifling a minority had no claim to a hearing in the settlement of the destinies of that province. But they had the most sacred of duties to fulfil. They were placed as sentinels on

the southern outposts of Albania, and they were bound to defend with the last drop of their blood the post of honour and of peril which nature had intrusted to them. They had no rancorous animosity towards Hellenism. On the contrary, they had in many ways felt its influence for good. They owed to it much of the little education they possessed. But they were not disposed to sacrifice their birthright to the ambition of Athenian politicians. Let Greece treat with them on a footing of equality, and there was nothing to prevent an intimate union between the two nations. But they were not prepared to exchange the rule of Constantinople for that of Athens, and the measure of liberty which they enjoyed under the Sultan's sovereignty for the incubus of Greek centralisation. To prevent such a consummation, they relied not only on their own arms, and on those of the Albanians north of the Kalamas whose essential interests were equally at stake with their own, but on the justice of Europe. It was no religious fanaticism against their Christian neighbours which inspired the movement, but their strong national sentiment, which, in Albania alone, almost of all countries in the East, was more powerful than sectarian prejudices. The Tchamis had the reputation of being the most fanatical among Moslem Albanians. Religion sat, perhaps, more lightly on the Mussulmans of northern and central Albania; but the Tchamis were Albanians first, and only in the second place followers of the Prophet. Albania was determined to vindicate her right to independence against all comers, and no religious considerations would restrain the Tchamis from joining in the struggle for the common cause,

whatever faith its adversaries might profess. The European statesmen of all parties have repeatedly stated that their policy is directed solely towards the protection of the populations of the East without reference to creed distinctions. How can they refuse to listen to the Albanians, who claim a hearing, not as Christians or as Mussulmans, but on the ground of a nationality common to both?

These are the leading ideas which appear to inspire the present movement, and which I have heard out of every Albanian's mouth, now couched in stronger, and now in more guarded terms, according to the speaker's position or character. Its prospects, and the turn which it is likely to take, depend upon the attitude of the Turkish and Greek Governments respectively towards it. The Greeks do not yet appear to have appreciated the immense value of the support which they might obtain from Albania by the simple recognition of its rights, and by renouncing vain dreams of annexation. On the other hand, the Porte scarcely seems to have realised on what a slender basis its rule in Albania rests. To encourage and strengthen the League for momentary objects, it has gradually withdrawn its military and administrative hold on the Albanian provinces of the empire. It has handed over all the public offices and administrative posts to Albanians; and the troops who garrison the country, with the exception of those under Dervish Pasha at Scutari, are Albanian Nizams and Redifs. On the day when Greek advances or Turkish stubbornness induce the League to give the word of command, the officials and the troops throughout Albania will throw off the *Stamboulina* and the Turkish uniform, and appear as what they are, notwithstanding the disguise they wear

to-day — the servants not of the Porte, but of the League.

The slanting rays of the sun had just reached the straggling houses of Mazaraki, embowered in pleasant masses of green foliage, as we took leave on the following morning of the Albanian Pasha, and turned our horses' heads towards the northern mouth of the valley. It was a delightful ride in the crisp autumnal morning, up hill and down dale, past cheerful villages and luxuriant plantations of olive and of walnut, to the small port of Gomenitza. The extensive ruins of a Venetian fort bear witness to its past. As to its present not much can be said, except that nature has favoured it with a most lovely position. It lies at the head of a deep bay, enclosed by green and wooded heights, above which tower the mountains of Albania; and on the western horizon, out of the blue waters of the Adriatic, the cliffs and hills of Corfu rise in bold relief against the sky. Here I chartered a small barque to convey me across to Corfu; and as the coasts of Albania slowly receded in the gloaming, it was with a heavy heart I bade farewell to a country whose inhabitants had won my regard more quickly by their manly bearing, their brave hearts, their ready wits, and their straightforward speech, than any other race I had met with in the East since I left the Druses of the Syrian Hauran.

P.S.—Eight weeks have elapsed since the above was written, and already the Albanian movement has assumed proportions which must add a fresh element of anxiety to the threatening position of affairs in the Balkan peninsula. The surrender of Dulcigno, and the apparent collapse of the vaunted Albanian resistance, seemed at one time to justify the sceptics who derided the movement as a mere

hollow farce prompted from the Palace of Yeldiz. But those who looked further than the mere surface were not at a loss to account for the change which at that time came over the counsels of the League. The energy of Dervish Pasha, and the large forces under his command, contributed doubtless in some measure to discourage resistance. The real key to the enigma must, however, be sought elsewhere. Towards that period it became known throughout Albania that, even at the time when the naval demonstration was being put on the boards, some of the European Powers, and notably the Power who had been chiefly instrumental in organising the demonstration, had proposed equally to exercise pressure on the Porte in order to obtain for Albania some form of autonomous government. It therefore became apparent to the leaders of the League that, notwithstanding Turkish denunciations, the opinion of Europe was not so essentially hostile to the Albanians as they had been led to believe; and they resolved to modify accordingly their own attitude with regard to the cession of territory demanded by the Powers. They consented reluctantly and *provisionally* to the surrender of Dulcigno. But the bitterness which they had hitherto entertained towards Europe was turned into a new channel. The rejection by the Sultan of the final demand for autonomy propounded by the general meeting of the Skipetars at Dibra, the treacherous

arrest of Prink Bib Doda and Hodo Pasha, and other high-handed measures of Dervish Pasha, finally destroyed all hopes of a compromise between the League and the Porte. Already the whole of north-eastern Albania has thrown off its allegiance to the Sultan; the Turkish functionaries have been driven out of Uskub, Kossova, Prizrend; the mountaineers are gathering in their thousands around the standard of Ali Pasha of Goussinieh. The haughty refusal of the Arghyro-castro league to furnish the Redifs demanded by the Pasha of Yanina, stating that Albania henceforth required her sons to fight her own battles, and had no longer blood to spare for mercenary work, shows the prevalence of the same independent spirit among the southern Albanians. Though hitherto they have not openly hoisted the standard of rebellion, their delegates have taken their seats in the general Council of the League which now governs the country from Prizrend, and, if they are still restrained from more energetic action, it is only by the menace of Greek invasion. Should the position there be altered, either by diplomatic negotiations or by friendly advances on the part of the Hellenic Government, the Tchamis will be free to cast in their lot unreservedly with the national party; and from the shores of the Ambracian Gulf to the Montenegrin border the Albanians will be seen united in the vindication of their rights.

ON SOME OF SHAKESPEARE'S FEMALE CHARACTERS :

BY ONE WHO HAS PERSONATED THEM.

III.—DESDEMONA.

BRYNTYSILIO, NEAR LLANGOLLEN, NORTH WALES,
10th September 1880.

"My fair warrior." "O, she was heavenly true!"

YES, my dear friend, I will try to gratify your wish, that I should put before you in words the Desdemona that was in my heart and mind in the days when I was first called to embody her upon the stage. It was among my earliest efforts, and I was then a very young girl ; but she had been long for me a creature into whose life I had entered with a passionate sympathy, which I cannot even now recall without emotion. In the gallery of heroes and heroines which my young imagination had fitted up for my daily and nightly reveries, Desdemona filled a prominent place. How could it be otherwise? A being so bright, so pure, so unselfish, generous, courageous, — so devoted in her love, so unconquerable in her faith to her "kind lord," even while dying by his hand ; and all this beauty of body and mind blasted by the machinations of a soulless villain, who "out of her own goodness" made the net that enmeshed her too credulous husband, and her absolutely guileless self !

The manner, too, of her death increased her hold upon my imagination. Owing, I suppose, to delicate health and the weak action of my heart, the fear of being smothered haunted me continually. The very thought of being in a crowd, of any pressure near me, would fill me with terror. I would

give up any delight rather than face it. Thus it was that, because of this favourite terror of my own, the manner of Desdemona's death had a fearful significance for me. That she should, in the midst of this frightful death-agony, be able not only to forgive her torturer, but to keep her love for him unchanged, was a height of nobleness surpassing that of all the knights and heroes I had ever read of. Hers, too, was "the pang without the palm." Juliet, Cordelia, Imogen, Hermione, sufferers as they were, had no such suffering as this. For hers was the supreme anguish of dying, while the one in whose regard she desired to stand highest believed her tainted and impure ! To a loving, noble woman, what fate could be more terrible than this !

Of course I did not know in those days that Desdemona is usually considered a merely amiable, simple, yielding creature, and is also generally so represented on the stage. This is the last idea that would have entered my mind. To me she was in all things worthy to be a hero's bride, and deserving the highest love, reverence, and gratitude from the noble Moor. "Gentle" she was, no doubt (the strong are naturally gentle), — and Othello in one place calls her so. But he uses the epithet in the Italian and old English sense, implying that

union of nobility of person and of disposition which speaks in an unconscious grace of movement and of outward look. This was what I imagine was in Wordsworth's mind when speaking of "the gentle lady married to the Moor;" and when he discoursed on that favourite theme, on which, he says, "right voluble I am," I can fancy that he drew his heroine in much the same lines as those in which she presented herself to my young imagination. I cannot think he would have singled her out in his famous sonnet as he does, had he not thought her as brave as she was generous, as high of heart as she was sweet of nature, or had he regarded her as a soft, insipid, plastic creature, ready to do any one's bidding, and take placidly any ill-usage from mere weakness and general characterless docility. Oh no! Such creatures do not win the love of the purest and noblest, and the attachment and admiration of all.

It was well for me that I never saw *Desdemona*, or indeed any of Shakespeare's heroines, on the stage, before I had to impersonate them myself. I was thus hampered by no traditions, and my ideals were not interfered with by recollections of what others had done. I struggled, as best I could, to give expression to the characters, as I had thought them out for myself, looking only at the text, and ignoring all commentators and critics, for they perplexed but did not help me. Crude and imperfect as my conceptions were—and no one found this out sooner than myself, as time and experience widened them—yet they seemed to make themselves felt by my audiences, who, to my surprise and delight, were always most kind and indulgent to me.

Very often I meet people now who tell me they saw my first performances, and speak of them as

though they were great things. (You ask me to talk of myself, so you see I do). They were better satisfied than I was, because I knew that I could do far better with encouragement and practice.

But ah, how my heart ached when the critics flung great names at me! A Siddons, an O'Neill,—what could I know of them? How they thought about my heroines—for they were mine, a part of me—I could not tell. Did they look at them with the same eyes, think the same thoughts about them, as I did? No one could tell me that. I was only told with what grand effect one spoke certain lines, how another looked and sobbed and fainted in a certain situation. Fortunately for me, the critics then, as now, did not all agree. I was not allowed to see newspapers; but somehow unkind criticisms are sure to find their way through one channel or another, and to make their barb felt. A critic, to do good, and give a lesson worth learning, should find out first what is good—for no work worth speaking of at all can be without some good—and then the faults can be told and listened to in a proper and patient spirit.

Happily, however, I found not a few who did not daunt me with tales of my predecessors, but encouraged me to persevere in my own course, to trust to my own conceptions, and to believe that these would work out a more adequate expression as I gained a greater mastery of my art. Among such, my *Desdemona* was peculiarly welcomed as rescuing the character, as I was told, out of the commonplace, and lifting her into her true position in the tragedy. This view was especially pressed upon me by Mr Elton, the gentleman who acted Brabantio,—an excellent actor in Mr Macready's picked company, who, alas!

was drowned in a shipwreck a year or two later. He told me that my Desdemona was a new creation for him ; that, to use his own phrase,—and I remember it well,—it restored the balance of the play by giving her character its due weight in the action, and thus for the first time was the *chiaroscuro* of the tragedy, as he said, seen by him. Words no less encouraging fell from Mr Macready, my Othello. He told me my brightness and gaiety in the happy early scenes at Cyprus helped him greatly, and that, when sadder, I was not lachrymose ; and, above all, that I added intensity to the last act by “being so difficult to kill.” Indeed I felt that last scene as if it were a very struggle for my own life. I would not die with my honour tarnished, without the chance of disabusing my husband's mind of the vile thoughts that tore it. I felt for *him* as well as for myself, for I knew what remorse and misery would overwhelm him when he should come to know how cruelly he had wronged me ; and therefore I threw into my remonstrance all the powers of passionate appeal that I could command.

I recall with gratitude the comfort and instruction for which I was indebted to my good friend Brabantio,—my “cruel father,” as I used to call him. He was the kindest and gentlest of men ; thoroughly well read, of fine tastes, and an accomplished rather than a powerful actor. It seems but yesterday that I sat by his side in the green-room at the reading of Robert Browning's beautiful drama, “The Blot in the Scutcheon.” As a rule, Mr Macready always read the new plays. But owing, I suppose, to some press of business, the task was intrusted on this occasion to the head prompter,—a clever man in his way, but wholly unfitted to bring out, or even to understand, Mr

Browning's meaning. Consequently, the delicate subtle lines were twisted, perverted, and sometimes even made ridiculous in his hands. My “cruel father” was a warm admirer of the poet. He sat writhing and indignant, and tried by gentle asides to make me see the real meaning of the verse. But somehow the mischief proved irreparable, for a few of the actors during the rehearsals chose to continue to misunderstand the text, and never took the interest in the play which they must have done had Mr Macready read it,—for he had great power as a reader. I always thought it was chiefly because of this *contresens* that a play, so thoroughly dramatic, failed, despite its painful story, to make the great success which was justly its due.

Kind Mr Elton ! In those cold, cheerless, wintry days, his salutation was always the same : “Well, how does Spring Morning ?” And if my eyes and heart were heavy from having heard my faults too harshly censured, he would say—“noticing, I suppose, my depressed manner,—“So April showers have been falling !” When I asked him to watch and check my faults, he positively refused, saying, “I heard already too much of them. I must remember I was passing through my novitiate—not, like most others, before a provincial, but before a London audience, and that I must expect to have much to learn. But if I kept always thinking of myself and my shortcomings, I should spoil my style, the charm of which was my self-forgetfulness and power of identifying myself with the character I was acting. How was I to be a real Juliet or Desdemona if I had my defects uppermost in my mind ? I must trust to their falling away from me by practice in my art.”

He was the more tender, I can now see, partly in consequence of my extreme sensitiveness and my dissatisfaction with my own efforts, and partly from seeing too strong a disposition in Mr Macready to take exception to everything I did which was not exactly in accordance with his own notions. "My dear, you are entirely wrong in this conception," was a phrase constantly in his mouth. The young girl was expected to take the same view as the ripe artist, who had had great experience, no doubt, but who had also confirmed habits, and whose strong masculine mind had in it but little of the feminine element. I believed in him, and could not act by his side without being moved and influenced by his intense earnestness and power. I tried hard to do what he advised—too much so; for, perhaps you remember, I was accused of having caught his manner and expression. It was almost impossible to do otherwise, considering the many hours one had to pass under his direction. Rehearsals began at ten in the morning, and usually went on until three or four. In the revival of an old, or the bringing out of a new play, these rehearsals were continued daily for three weeks at least, sometimes four or five.

Still, unflinching disciplinarian as he was, Mr Macready was not always stern. He could joke, and had "pretty things to say" upon occasion. I always did my best to be punctual; but I had to drive three miles to the theatre—a distance which, if I had acted the previous night, I found rather trying in the early winter mornings. I remember well one morning when I was a little late, I found that I had been already "called" for the stage. On reaching it, I made my apologies, but said that if they looked at the time they would find I was but ten minutes

after the hour, and I understood that ten minutes' grace was always given. "Ah," said Mr Macready, turning gravely to me, "not to you! We all agree that you do not require it: you have enough already." In the general laugh I was of course forgiven. Then with all his sternness, how tender-hearted he was when illness was present! All knew, that for the great exertion of the lungs in this my first girlhood nature revenged herself by inflicting on me a cough which harassed and distressed me night and day. Often, often has Mr Macready said to me, "My poor child, your cough goes to my heart. How I wish I could spare you!" And when at last, after my third winter, I had to give up and go to a milder climate for a year, he never omitted writing to me every week, advising me what books to read, and encouraging and expecting me to write and give him my criticisms upon them; sending me news of the theatre; and, best of all, bidding me get well soon, as I was greatly asked for and missed, and he could not revive or bring forward certain plays without my help. This was my only drop of comfort; for, despite the love and care of a dear friend who left her home to tend and watch over me, it was a weary time this banishment—this separation from the art which was all in all to me; for from it I had derived almost my only happiness in a hitherto lonely, little-cared-for life. I could not but see, too, that my friends did not expect I should grow better. I do not think I very much cared. By the very young I believe life is not highly prized. But oh, the inaction, the enforced care and thought for myself, the wearing cough by night, the sameness of the dreary days! Had my life not been just before so different, so full of work, of imaginative excitement, doubt-

less my spirits would not have sunk so low. But happily, the dreary winter and trying spring gave way at last to summer: summer and youth triumphed over my illness, and before another winter I was well again.

I have wandered far from my text. "Old memories, they cling, they cling!" But as my thoughts travel back to these well-remembered days, and the

"Manche liebe Schatten steigen auf,"

of which Goethe speaks, my pen runs on with a freedom which I feel sure your friendship will forgive. You see, with encouragement, how conceited and "self-imbued" I can become.

Now let me go back to Desdemona, as I dreamed of her in those days, and as I think of her still. As in the case of Ophelia and Portia, so her mother has obviously been long dead before Shakespeare takes up the story. Desdemona only once alludes to her mother, and that is in her hour of deepest bewilderment and sorrow; then she simply says, "My mother had a maid called Barbara," whose lover had "proved mad, and did forsake her." Like Portia, she was a noble Venetian lady, but there was a whole world of difference between their homes and their bringing up. No proud indulgent father watched the training of Desdemona's youth, and studied the progress of her heart and mind. Absorbed in state affairs, he seems to have been at no pains to read his daughter's nature, to engage her affections or her confidence. Thus, a creature, loving, generous, imaginative, was thrown back upon herself, and left to dream over characters more noble, and lives more checkered with adventure, than those she was in the habit of seeing in her father's luxurious home.

Making so small a part of her father's life, and missing the love, or the display of it, which would have been so precious to her, she finds her happiness in dreams of worth more exalted than any she has seen, but which she has heard and read of in the poets and romancers of her own and other times. Supreme mistress of her father's house, she receives his guests, dispenses his hospitalities; and, except that she has never felt the assurance of that father's love, she yet "hath felt no age nor known no sorrow," and is "a child to chiding."

Her father finds her obedient to his every wish, a most diligent mistress of his house affairs, — "a maiden never bold;" of "spirit still and quiet." He never thinks of the depths that may lie under this unruffled surface—not only hidden from his sight, but unknown to his child herself. He has found her "opposite to marriage" with the "curled darlings" of Venice, who had solicited her. As these have never moved her quiet, her love for what he imagines she feared to look on is, to his thinking, "against all rules of nature," and could only be brought about "by spells and medicines bought of mountebanks." The enchantment, the witchcraft with which love fills the heart, Brabantio has never felt or believed in. All must be magic which is not customary.

Shakespeare carefully shows, in Desdemona's address to the Senate, how matters stood between her father and herself. "Do you know in all this noble company," he asks her, "where most you owe obedience?" Obedience, observe, not affection. And what is her reply? Not that of a shrinking, timid girl, but that of a thoughtful woman; one whose mind and heart went with her love, whose courage is as

great and as high as she thinks the object of it worthy,—ready to meet the consequences, and, above all, to transfer to her own shoulders from Othello's the blame, of her abduction.

"That I did love the Moor to live with him,
My downright violence and storm of fortunes
May trumpet to the world;
And to his honours, and his valiant parts,
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate."

Of her father she says he "is the lord of duty." To him she is bound for "life and education;" these teach her "how to respect him." Just as he has not asked, so not a word does she say about love and affection towards him. He is silenced. She owns freely all she owes him for "life and education." Up to the time of her marriage he is first;—she owes and pays him all obedience, all respect.

"But here's my husband;
And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor, my lord."

From all we see of *Desdemona*'s readiness to give more than is expected from her of love and service, even to those who had much slighter claims upon her, I cannot think she would have been wanting in these to her father, had he not chilled her girlhood's natural demonstrations of affection. There is a kind of proud frowardness in some natures which, even while loving dearly, will yet hold aloof from, keep at a distance, the objects of their love. They claim as a right that which will not grow without some care and fostering, some responsive look, some tender words.

It is hardly conceivable that Brabantio should not have been

proud of this daughter, of whose beauty and fascination he must have heard all tongues speak in praise. What pains has not Shakespeare taken to tell us over and over again what this gracious creature was! As she moved among her father's guests in his palace halls, or flashed in her gondola along the canals of Venice, what admiring eyes must have followed her! Of her serene grace and womanly gentleness Brabantio's words have informed us. Cassio, the gentleman and scholar of high blood and breeding, speaks of her as

"A maid
That paragons description and wild fame."

When she lands in Cyprus it is

"The riches of the ship is come on shore."

High as Othello stands in his regard, yet she is above even him in excellence. She is "our great captain's captain." Though dead to belief in all human excellence, even Iago is not blind either to her virtues or her beauty. Although to Roderigo he calls her "a super-subtle Venetian," yet to Cassio he says, "She is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than is requested." But if she is such as this to the general eye, what is she to Othello's? To him she is "the cunning'st pattern of excelling nature." "The world hath not a sweeter creature." And then her sweet womanly graces! "So delicate with her needle: an admirable musician: O she will sing the savageness out of a bear; of so high and plenteous wit and invention! And then of so gentle a condition!" She is pictured to us, in short, as possessed of every quality which could lay hold of a hero's heart, and bring joy into his home.

"If Heaven could make me such another world
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
I'd not have sold her for it!"

What imagination would not kindle at the images thus set before it! Who would be content to see in this exquisite woman, as so many do, only a pretty piece of yielding amiability!

As with Imogen, so with Desdemona, Shakespeare has, in the passages cited, and in many others throughout the play, taken infinite pains to show how these his favourite heroines excelled in every accomplishment,—how the grace, the purity, the dignity of their minds gave added charm to the fascination of their beauty and their manners. And this woman, this "divine Desdemona," whose mind has been fed, as in those stirring times of war it was sure to be, with "tales of high emprise and chivalry," and whose heart is ready for the inspiring touch which was to kindle it,—is placed by her father under the influence which was above all others likely to captivate her fancy,—that of the great general, of Moorish but royal blood, whose name was in every mouth, on whose valour and generalship the State had leant, and was leaning still, as its chief stay. Long before she saw Othello, Desdemona must have pictured to herself this remarkable man, about whose almost fabulous history the world's talk had been so loud, and whose valorous deeds were in every mouth. How dull must Brabantio have been, when he so oft invited the great hero of the day to his house! If he found pleasure in "questioning" the story of Othello's life, why did he not cast a thought upon the still greater charm that story might have for his daughter's ear? Dull and blind indeed must the old man have been, not to see that the

blunt soldier tells it "o'er and o'er" because of the sweet listener at his side; not to see how quickly, when called away by house affairs, she steals back, sinking quietly into her seat so as not to interrupt the tale. The tremor in Desdemona's manner, which her father mistook for fear, had quite another origin. She felt frightened, not at Othello, but at herself,—at the novel, bewildering, absorbing feeling that, hour by hour, was overmastering her.

The rapt attention—the eager, tender eyes,—often suffused with tears,—when Othello spoke of "being taken by the insolent foe, and sold to slavery,"—the parted lips and shortened breath,—if these were noted by Brabantio, it would seem that he thought of them as of no more moment than if his daughter had been listening to some skilled *improvisatore*. That her being could be moved, her heart touched, by this stranger to her race and country,—

"The extravagant and wheeling stranger
Of here and everywhere,"

as Roderigo calls him, whose complexion was like "the shadowed livery of the burnished sun"—had never crossed his mind. He would as soon have thought of her being attracted by her torch-bearer, or her gondolier, as by one whom he classes with "bond slaves and pagans."

This wide difference of feeling could not have existed between father and child had there been any living sympathy between them. He would have foreseen the danger of exposing a girl dawning into womanhood, and of sensibilities so deep, to such an unusual fascination, and she would have turned to him when she found herself in danger of being overmastered by a feeling, the indulgence in which might

wreck his peace or her own. But the father, who is only the "lord of duty," has established no claim upon her heart; and that heart, hitherto untouched, is stolen from her during these long interviews, insensibly but for ever.

We are not to think that all this happens suddenly. The father is not surprised into losing his child. If he has been deceived, it is by himself, and not by her. Othello speaks of having "some nine moons wasted" away from the tented field. Many of these may have been passed in Venice. Much time, therefore, may have flitted happily away in these interrupted recitals, before Othello found "good means to draw" from Desdemona

"A prayer of earnest heart
That he would all his pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something
heard,
But not intently."

When the story has been told from first to last, she gives him "for his pains a world of sighs."

"'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful;
She wished she had not heard it. Yet
she wished
That Heaven had made her such a man,"

so noble, so self-devoting, so grandly-enduring—so altogether spotless and heroic. Here comes out the warrior spirit which I have ascribed to her,—the power of kindling, of understanding and rising up to, heroic deeds. We feel, even apart from Othello's words and her own subsequent avowal, that "her heart's subdued even to the very quality" of her lord. Thenceforth she is his own, in war or peace, in life and death, for evermore. The accident of the difference in Othello's complexion, which operates against him in other eyes, endears him to hers. It touches her generosity. "I saw Othello's visage in his mind," and

"to his honours and his valiant parts" she consecrates her soul and fortunes from that moment.

Thus, under his very eyes, was Brabantio's daughter wooed and won; for he does not venture to gainsay this, after Othello has delivered his "round unvarnished tale" to the Venetian Council. But his very blindness—indifference it could not be—must have shown the lovers the impossibility of gaining his consent to their union.

Therefore did the "maiden never bold" take courage to leave her father's home, and give herself in marriage to the Moor. She had also the true, quiet courage, when sent for to the Senate-house, to appeal directly to the Duke, begging him to hear her story, and to let her find a "charter in his voice to assist her simpleness." When her "unfolding" is ended, there is but one feeling in the Council—to "let her will have free way." The Duke, in bidding "good-night to every one," adds to Brabantio—

"And, noble signior,
If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than
black."

The first senator says, "Adieu, brave Moor; use Desdemona well." Then does Brabantio let out the cold malignity of his natural disposition,—the unforgiving cruelty which he keeps to the last, so that it may sting and wound more surely,—

"Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to
see;
She has deceived her father, and may
thee."

Othello responds, "My life upon her faith!"

How vain, how futile are his words! Desdemona never forgot them. But how was it with Othello? Although at the time cast aside,

defied, yet they struck home as they were intended; and with such a listener as Iago, intent, as we know beforehand, on revenge, and caring not by what means he brings it about, Brabantio puts the weapon into his hands, which, adroitly wielded by this subtle fiend, leads on to the fearful climax—"the tragic loading" of Desdemona's bed! These fatal words open up to him the whole devilish scheme on which the play turns, and he closes the scene saying—

"I have it; 'tis engender'd. Hell and night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the
world's light!"

Well might Othello say, "My life upon her faith!" How valiantly has she—his few hours' wife—stood by him before these haughty senators and her much-dreaded father! how surprised him with delight, begging, this delicately-nurtured lady, to be allowed to share with him the hardships and perils of the impending campaign—to live with him in the "tented field"! Had she been one who loved her ease and pleasure, such an one as Iago chooses to describe Venetian women in general to have been, was she likely to make such a request? Who cannot see that this woman was of the true heroic mould—fearless as she was gentle? At the time her request appears to have gone to Othello's heart,—to have moved him to endless gratitude, as well it might. When they met at Cyprus, the first words on his lips are, "Oh, my fair warrior!" The phrase, doubtless, afterwards became a favourite one with them; and it is touching to find Desdemona using it, after Othello's to her incomprehensible frenzy concerning the handkerchief, when she rebukes herself for her momentary harsh thought of him—

"Beshrew me much, Emilia,
I was, unhandsome warrior as I am,
Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;
But now I find I had suborn'd the witness,
And he's indicted falsely."

"My life upon her faith!" Yes, whatever these words were for Othello, they were ever dear to her, believing, as she does almost to the last, that her noble Moor's love and trust were as absolute as her own. In this her very innocence, in her loyalty to her husband, and to his friend Michael Cassio, Iago finds the easy means to accomplish his fiendish purpose.

It is the highest tribute to Desdemona that she alone is unguiled by Iago's subtlety. Othello, Roderigo, Cassio, Emilia, he plays upon them all,—uses them, gets them within his fatal grasp,—makes of them his tools or his dupes,—leads them on blindly to their own undoing. Not so Desdemona.

"Oh, she was innocent!
And to be innocent is nature's wisdom!
Oh, surer than suspicion's hundred eyes
Is that fine sense, which to the pure in
heart,
By mere oppugnancy of their own goodness,
Reveals the approach of evil!"

Iago, conscious of this, makes no attempt to deceive her. His victim she may be, but he feels she will never be his dupe. After the first meeting in Cyprus, he appears never to have come into contact with her, until she sends for him, to see if he can throw light upon the unaccountable change that has come over her husband. Had he dared to approach her with the faintest suggestion that Othello was untrue, she would have treated him as Nina Sforza, another noble Venetian lady, treated a similar traducer in Zouch Troughton's fine modern tragedy which bears her name:—

"My Doria false!
Oh, I could strike thee, liar!"

Except to illustrate the truth that no man knows himself, I marvel why Shakespeare makes Othello speak of himself as "not easily jealous." It seems to me that the spark scarcely touches the tinder before it is aflame. A few words dropped by the tempter take hold of him even when his happiness is at the fullest; when he has just parted from Desdemona in a transport of content, which finds vent in the words—

"Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul,
But I do love thee! And when I love thee not,
Chaos is come again!"

Chaos *has* come! An artfully muttered "Indeed!"—a question about Cassio's previous acquaintance with his wife, and his suspicion is at once aroused. Othello insists upon knowing Iago's "thinkings," on wringing from him the meanings of his "stops," gives admission to the idea that he may be wronged; and when Iago, by way of seeming warning, bids him beware of "jealousy," you see, from his agonised exclamation, "Oh misery!" that the word has sunk into the very depths of his being. All the love, all the devoted self-sacrifice of Desdemona, all sense of what is due to her and to himself, are forgotten. He suffers Iago to remind him of her father's parting words, and so to pour his envenomed slime upon this fair creature, to whom he owes so much, that her name and fame can never again in life show fair in his eyes.

"She's gone; I am abused, and my relief
Must be to loathe her."

And thus, because of the foul words, the vile suggestion of this

base Machiavellian trickster, the life of these two noble beings is turned from paradise to hell, and there is no more peace nor joy for either of them.

Othello is right, when he says of Iago that he

"Knows all qualities, with a learned spirit,
Of human dealings."

But that he should think him "honest," this is the marvel. Nor less marvel is it, that knowing him to be but a "rough soldier," and, as Iago says of himself, by nature apt "to spy into abuses," and to "shape things that are not," he can allow him, even distantly, to approach the sanctuary of his wife's virtue. Men, as we know, may possess all manly gifts, and be as decorous and moral in their conduct as need be, yet, through some defect of nature or of training, or of both, may be quite incapable of conceiving the noblest qualities of womanhood. To understand these, there must be some sympathy, some affinity. Therefore Iago might be in a sense "honest," yet totally unfit to speak or be listened to on such a subject. Had Othello been really the "noble Moor," as "true of mind" as Desdemona thought him, he would, at the lightest aspersion of his wife, have recoiled from Iago as from a serpent. He would have crushed the insolent traducer and his vile suggestions beneath his heel in bitterest contempt.

"Not easily jealous"! Of all men, Othello had cause not to be jealous. Capable as he had proved himself of admiring Desdemona's trustful, reverential love, of appreciating her graceful, playful fondness—new as it was to him, and touching, as it did, chords which had never vibrated during a life spent hitherto among men in the

rough scenes of war, his senses fascinated by her beauty, as his mind was by the purity and sympathy of hers—how could he fall away from his allegiance so soon? Was such a woman as Desdemona likely to become untrue because he had not a fair skin or silky manners? "She had eyes, and chose me!" Or why should he think he had been displaced in her affections by Cassio? Cassio was obviously an older friend of Desdemona than himself,—a welcome visitor at Brabantio's house; for in their wooing he "went between them very oft." He makes no secret of his admiration of Desdemona; and we may be sure that, had she shown him the slightest favour, he would have been among her suitors. But no. All his advantages of person, of mind and manners, had given him no hold even upon her fancy. His best recommendation to her had been, that he was ever eloquent in Othello's praise.

"What! Michael Cassio,
That came a-wooing with you, and so
many a time,
When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,
Hath ta'en your part!"

As if she had ever spoken of him dispraisingly,—except, perhaps, for the pleasure of having her ears filled with his praises by one who "had known him long"! Yet not a thought of this crosses Othello's mind; and he leaps at once to the conclusion that both the tried friend and the wife who had forsworn for his sake "country, credit, everything," were false to him. And this he does upon the mere suggestion of a villain whom he absurdly believes to be "of exceeding honesty." Truly had Iago gauged him when he said—

"The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest that but seem
to be so;
And will as tenderly be led by the nose
As asses are!"

But Iago could neither see nor feel that his nature, free and open as it might be, lacked that true nobility which, being itself incapable of baseness, is resolutely closed to innuendoes against those it loves. Alas the while! But for this fatal defect, how could Othello have fallen so easy a prey to his malignant tempter,—how could he have come so readily to believe that he had been discarded there, where, as he says, he had "garner'd up his heart"—

"Where either I must live or have no
life;
The fountain from the which my current
runs,
Or else dries up"?

We feel with him when he exclaims, "Oh, the pity of it, the pity of it!" but we feel, too, that had he but possessed some of Desdemona's loyalty, some grains of common-sense, all Iago's snares might have been set for him in vain.

For, after all, Iago, as I have said, seems to me but a poor trickster at the best. He acts from the basest motives, and works by artifices the shallowest as well as the most vile,—artifices liable to be upset at any moment by the merest casualty. He hates Othello mortally for having, as he thinks, unfairly kept him out of his lieutenantcy. If Othello erred in this, his injustice is paid for by a fearful penalty. Iago's jealousy of Othello with his wife is but one of those conscious sacrifices to what he himself calls the "divinity of hell," which he resorts to as juggles with his own conscience. He hates Cassio for the same cause, and for supplanting him in his office. He hates his wife, as such creatures hate the wives that have "outlived their liking." He is brutish in mind as, when he dare be, he is in manners, and he is as sordid as he

is vindictive—using Roderigo, that “poor trash of Venice,” as a sponge to squeeze ducats from. Above all, he hates Desdemona, because she is impervious to his arts. Cunning as he is, yet he is in hourly terror that the net he has woven to ensnare others may enmesh himself. One word of frank explanation between Othello and Desdemona, a whisper from Emilia that the handkerchief was given by herself to her husband, a hint from Roderigo to Desdemona of the lies with which Iago has fooled him,—and all his fine-spun web would have fallen to pieces. He knows this well, and sees no way of escape but in the murder of his dupes. Roderigo and Cassio must be “removed,” and the Moor goaded on to murder his wife. To murder her,—and how? Othello would have made her death swift and easy by poison. But this is not torture enough to satisfy Iago. “Strangle her in her bed—even the bed she hath contaminated!” When we think of all that has gone before—when with this suggestion still recent on his lips, we see him afterwards by the side of Desdemona, summoned by her in her trouble, as her “good friend,” we feel inclined to echo his own words, “There is no such man; it is impossible.”

Iago has wit enough to see some of the good qualities of his victims, and, judging of other men by himself—for he knows no other standard—he acts with full reliance on the vices and the weaknesses of mankind. But he has not wit enough to see that he is playing a game in which he must lose in the end, for all the odds are against the chance of his victims being swept away so completely, that his villainy can never come to light. I see no grandeur in a “demi-devil” of this type; and I think the judgment misplaced which can find it in his expressed

determination to answer no questions, even upon the rack. He had already said too much in his garrulous boast of having tricked his victims by dropping Desdemona’s handkerchief in Cassio’s chamber. A cleverer villain would have held his peace. Woeful indeed it is, that a creature so despicable should have power to hurt Othello’s mind past curing, to drag it down into the very mire,—that he should have made him think base thoughts, and stain his soul so deeply that no years of penitential grief could wash it clean again. History has not on record such another inhuman villain. In my young dreams I never could quite decide into which of the circles of the Inferno he should be cast; even the worst seemed too good for him.

Is not my view of both Othello and Iago borne out by the brief, sad story, that rushes on so swiftly to its ghastly climax? We see little of the blissful life which Othello and Desdemona lived after their happy union as married lovers at Cyprus. After all his terrors for her safety, that he should find Desdemona safely landed there before him, is a relief and a joy past all expressing. With a foreboding of evil he fears that—

“Not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.”

Indeed troubles begin early to press upon them. Cassio, their friend, endeared to them by the closest ties, so unaccountably forgets himself that his general has at once to strip him of his lieutenancy. This must be a great sorrow to them both. Still, the rent is not irreparable; and we learn that Othello would have been glad of a fair excuse to reinstate his friend. When Desdemona first speaks for Cassio, we see that she knew

Othello's mind. He pretends—
but only pretends—to be absorbed
in other matters, for the pleasure
of hearing her plead as a petitioner.
He puts her off only to hear her
urge her suit again.

“Good my lord,
If I have any grace or power to move
you,
His present reconciliation take ;
For, if he be not one that truly loves
you,
That errs in ignorance and not in cun-
ning,
I have no judgment in an honest face.
Good love, call him back.

Oth. Not now, sweet Desdemona ; some
other time.

Des. But shall't be shortly ?

Oth. The sooner, sweet, for you.

Des. Shall't be to-night at supper ?

Oth. No, not to-night.

Des. To-morrow dinner then ?

Oth. I shall not dine at home.

Des. Why then, to-morrow night, or
Tuesday morn ;

Or Tuesday noon, or night, or Wednes-
day morn ;—

I pray thee, name the time ; but let it not
Exceed three days ; in faith he's peni-
tent.

... I wonder in my soul
What you would ask of me I should deny,
Or stand so mammering on. What !

Michael Cassio,
That came a-wooing with you,” &c.

When Othello sees that Desdemona
is hurt at his silence, he breaks in
with—

“Prithee, no more : let him come when
he will :
I will deny thee nothing.”

But she thinks this so small a favour
to be granted to a friend who had
done so much for them, that she
will hardly accept it as such. The
“great captain's captain” will not
have it called a “boon.” 'Tis only
so slight a service as she would
“entreat him wear his gloves, or
feed on nourishing dishes ;”

“Nay, when I have a suit
Wherein I mean to touch your love
indeed,
It shall be full of poise and difficulty,
And fearful to be granted.”

He repeats his former words :—

“I will deny thee nothing ;
Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me
this,
To leave me but a little to myself.”

How sweet is her rejoinder !—

“Shall I deny you ? no : farewell, my
lord.”

He replies—

“Farewell, my Desdemona : I'll come to
thee straight”—

which draws from her the winning
assurance of her full faith in
him :—

“Be as your fancies teach you ;
Whate'er you be, I am obedient.”

And at this point ends the happi-
ness, which is as perfect now as it
well could be.

In the meantime, and while the
adder's tongue is busy at its work,
arrive the leading personages in
Cyprus invited by Othello to a
banquet. Desdemona receives them,
and plays the part of gracious host-
ess, so natural to her. To her sur-
prise Othello, who said he would
“come to her straight,” does not
appear. She fears his guests will
think him discourteous in this pro-
longed absence, and hastens herself
to remind him of their visitors.
She enters gaily, ready with a
pretty chiding :—

“How now, my dear Othello ?
Your dinner, and the generous islanders
By you invited, do attend your presence.
Oth. I am to blame.”

The coldness and reserve of his
speech startle her.

“Why do you speak so faint ? Are you
not well ?

Oth. I have a pain upon my forehead
here.

Des. Faith, that's with watching ; 'twill
away again :

Let me but bind it hard, within this
hour

It will be well.

Oth. Your napkin is too little ;
Let it alone.”

The anger and abruptness shown in this reply to her offer to relieve his pain must have come indeed as a shock to Desdemona, contrasting strangely as it did with the tone of their last parting so short a time before. Yet she sweetly adds, without noticing his rudeness,—

“I am very sorry that you are not well.”

No wonder, finding things so changed, and with no apparent cause, that she forgets the handkerchief, dear as it was to her, with which she had offered to bind his forehead. She is “a child to chiding,” and no doubt feels these first harsh words very keenly. They go out together, and we may suppose that her frank innocent demeanour and fond words reassure him for the time. I remember so well Mr Macready’s manner as we left the scene. He took my face in both his hands, looked long into my eyes, and then the old look came into his, and it spoke as plainly as possible, “My life upon her faith!”

What happens at the banquet we cannot tell. It cannot be the presence of Cassio which inflames Othello, for being in disgrace he would hardly be there. It may be that the free loyal homage which he sees paid to his wife, not only because of her position as his wife, but still more on account of her beauty and sweet courtesy to his guests, makes her still more precious in his eyes, so that the bare thought of not standing alone in her affections maddens him. But certainly he returns shortly after in a paroxysm of rage and grief, and salutes Iago with “Avaunt! begone! thou hast set me on the rack.” Then follows that exquisite speech in which he bids farewell to everything in life most dear—to “the tranquil mind!”—to “content!”—to all “pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war.”

“Farewell! Othello’s occupation’s gone!”

To direct the fury of Othello’s “waked wrath” into the desired channel, Iago has ready a whole catalogue of reasons to prove Desdemona and Cassio’s disloyalty. Othello accepts them readily, as though they were “proofs of Holy Writ.”

“Now I do see ’tis true. Look here, Iago;
All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven.
’Tis gone. . . . Swell, bosom, with thy
fraught,
For ’tis of aspics’ tongues!”

These “aspics’ tongues” have been hissing out their venom to deadly purpose. These are the drugs which Iago uses, and to which he again appeals:—

“Work on,—
My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools
are caught.”

Desdemona has made so sure of winning Othello’s consent to receive Cassio into favour again, that she sends for him to tell him the good news,—“Tell him I have moved my lord on his behalf, and hope all will be well.” But before they meet occurs the scene with the handkerchief, and Othello’s violence at the supposed loss of it. Still Desdemona, who knows nothing of its whereabouts, believing it to be only mislaid, and hoping to have it to show him when it has been properly searched for, thinks his vehemence on the subject a little over-strained—put upon her, indeed, “as a trick to drive her from her suit.” Therefore she still repeats it, urging Cassio’s claims upon him with the words—

“You’ll never meet a more sufficient man.

A man that, all his time,
Hath founded his good fortunes on your
love;
Shared dangers with you——”

It is only when Othello breaks angrily from her that she realises there may be "some wonder in this handkerchief; I am most unhappy in the loss of it."

Emilia, instead of being, as her husband fancies, inclined favourably towards Othello, appears to me to have the dislike common to her class of anything unusual, and looks all along upon the Moor with unfriendly, suspicious eyes.

"'Tis not a year or two shows us a man."

She no doubt had found it to be so: even Iago might have appeared to her in different colours when they were first wedded. Her pent-up dislike to the Moor adds fuel to her wrath, when she finds subsequently that he has been the easy dupe of her villanous husband.

After the episode of the handkerchief, when Cassio appears, who had been sent for by Desdemona to hear, as she hoped, good news, Desdemona, ever unselfish, is as sorry for him as for herself.

"Alas, thrice-gentle Cassio!

My advocacy is not now in tune;
My lord is not my lord; nor should I
know him

Were he in favour as in humour alter'd."

She remembers that she has pledged herself to be his "solicitor" even to the death:—

"You must awhile be patient:
What I can do I will; and more I will
Than for myself I dare: let that suffice
you."

Cassio will surely think of this hereafter!

The next time we see Desdemona, she comes with Lodovico, who has been sent to Cyprus from Venice, bearing to Othello the Duke's letters and commands. Desdemona salutes Lodovico as "cousin." He may be so, or this may be only a phrase of courtesy in the way that

royalty uses it. When speaking of him afterwards to Emilia, she says, "This Lodovico is a proper man." "A very handsome man," says Emilia. Desdemona replies: "He speaks well." See the difference in the women,—how finely marked in these comments! While Othello reads his papers, Lodovico inquires after his friend, Lieutenant Cassio. Upon this Desdemona, who never loses sight of her promise, says, "Cousin, there's fallen between him and my lord an unkind breach;" and beginning to fear that her own influence will not be sufficient, she adds, "But you shall make all well." "Is there division," Lodovico says, with evident surprise, "between my lord and Cassio?"

"A most unhappy one: I would do much
To atone them, for the love I bear to
Cassio."

This public declaration of her goodwill,—which appears, what in truth it is, nothing to those around but simply the natural feeling for a friend in trouble,—all but maddens Othello; and when Desdemona expresses her gladness that they are commanded home, and that Cassio is to be governor of Cyprus in his place, Othello breaks out, "I am glad to see you *mad*," AND STRIKES HER. All must think *him* mad.

"My lord, this would not be believed in
Venice,
Though I should swear I saw't; 'tis
very much:
Make her amends; she weeps."

Her tears, Othello says, are but those of a crocodile. To his fiercer injunction, "Out of my sight!" her only answer is, "I will not stay to offend you." Then she is called back, and comes upon the instant, true to her former words—"Whatever you be, I am obedient." Un-

touched by her gentleness, Othello continues :—

“Proceed you in your tears :
Concerning this, sir,—O well-painted
passion !—

Get you away ;
I'll send for you anon. . . . Hence,
—avaunt !”

No wonder that Lodovico, when Othello quits the scene, exclaims in amazement—

“Is this the noble Moor whom our full
senate
Call all-in-all sufficient ? This the
nature

Whom passion could not shake ? . . .
Are his wits safe ? Is he not light of
brain ?

What ! strike his wife !”

Iago prepares Lodovico for what he knows is to follow by replying, “Would I knew that stroke would prove the worst !” “I am sorry that I have been deceived in him,” is Lodovico's answer. He will remember afterwards that he has been deceived in more than in Othello.

Next come the Moor's interrogations of Emilia, and her replies :—

“I durst, my lord, to wager she is
honest,

Lay down my soul at stake : . . .
For if she be not honest, chaste, and
true,

There's no man happy.”

But she may as well speak to the winds. If Othello had spoken here of having seen the handkerchief in Cassio's hand, I believe, despite the terror of her husband, Emilia would have explained how she had herself found and given it to Iago ; but he does not. He sends her to fetch Desdemona, and then rudely dismisses her.

The poor dove is now in the falcon's grasp, but not quite yet to be torn to pieces. One wonders why Othello sends for her, for he

will believe nothing she says or swears.

“*Oth.* Swear thou art honest.

Des. Heaven doth truly know it.

Oth. Heaven truly knows that thou art
false as hell !

Des. To whom, my lord ? With whom ?
How am I false ?

Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed ?

Oth. . . . What committed !

I should make very forges of my cheeks,
That would to cinders burn up modesty,
Did I but speak thy deeds. What com-
mitted !

Des. By heaven, you do me wrong.”

When in the coarsest terms he asks her if she is not unfaithful, she exclaims, “No, as I am a Christian : no, as I shall be saved !”

Emilia finds her on the floor, to which she has sunk, after making oath on her knees, of her being to Othello “a true and loyal wife.” Think how stunned and bewildered she must be ! She is accused of a crime beyond all others most foreign to her nature. She can imagine no motive for the accusation,—has no clue to the “With whom ? How am I false ?” It is like a hideous dream ; and, with a pathos unsurpassed to my thinking in poetry, she answers Emilia's “How do you, my good lady ?” with

“Faith half asleep.

Emil. Good madam, what's the matter
with my lord ?

Des. Who is thy lord ?

Emil. He that is yours, sweet lady.

Des. I have none : do not talk to me,
Emilia ;

I cannot weep.

. Prithee to-night

Lay on my bed my wedding sheets,—
remember ;

And call thy husband hither.

Then follows that most pathetic scene, in which she so touchingly appeals for help to her destroyer, and asks, “Am I that name, Iago ?” “What name, fair lady ?” Not

being able to utter the foul word herself, she answers—

“Such as, she says, my lord did say I was.

O good Iago,
What shall I do to win my lord again?
Good friend, go to him; for, by this light
of heaven,
I know not how I lost him.”

She fears that in his anger he may shake her off “to beggarly divorcement.” Yet as she ever did, so she ever will “love him dearly.”

“Unkindness may do much;
And his unkindness may defeat my life,
But never taint my love.”

She has to put up with the cold comfort which Iago gives—pretending to know nothing.

“I pray you, be content; 'tis but his humour:

The business of the State does him offence,
And he does chide with you.”

At this she catches with trembling eagerness,—

“If 'twere no other—

Iago. It is but so, I warrant.

Go in, and weep not; all things shall be well.”

How sad it is that the exigencies of our stage require the omission of

the exquisite scene which follows (Act iv. sc. 3) in the anteroom to Desdemona's chamber,—a scene so important for the development of her character, and affording such fine opportunity for the highest powers of pathos in the actress.* Othello, says Emilia, “looks gentler;” but he has commanded her to be dismissed. “Dismiss me!” “So he says.” “I would you had never seen him!” “So would not I,” Desdemona rejoins—

“My love doth so approve him,
His very stubbornness, his checks, and frowns,—
Prithee, unpin me,—have grace and favour in them.”

She had before, when most unhappy, bidden Emilia lay her wedding-sheets that night upon her bed. Emilia now tells her she has done so. She replies—

“All's one. Good faith, how foolish are our minds!

If I do die before thee, prithee shroud me
In one of these same sheets,”—

little thinking how soon that shroud would be required. In what follows, what might not be done by that silent acting—that eloquence not of words but of look and gesture—which is the great test of the actor's powers! While

* I never saw this scene acted but once, and that was in Dresden. Certainly the Germans prove their high admiration and respect for our great poet. They give his plays in their integrity, never dreaming of cutting out the very scenes that are most necessary for the development of plot and character. Their scenery is good, appropriate, harmonious,—and stands, as it always should, in subservience to the plot and human interest in the play: it is so good that you never think of it. So of the costumes: you think you see the person represented. As all is in keeping, so you never criticise what the characters wear. You feel at once, they looked or did not look as they should, and give this subject no further heed. All these matters are deeply studied, but not so deeply talked about as they are here. They are but accessories, and only considered as such.

I feel very grateful for the draped curtain which drops down from the sides after a scene. While it is closed, such furniture as has been necessary for the scene is quietly withdrawn (no sofas pushed on and pulled off by very visible ropes),—and the next scene appears in a few minutes, on the withdrawal of the curtain, quite complete. In this way one of the great difficulties in presenting Shakespeare's plays, arising from the frequent changes of the scene, is got over. In Germany, a play of Shakespeare takes a whole evening; and the Germans will sit four or five hours listening patiently and delightedly to all he has to teach them.

Emilia is “unpinning” her mistress, I picture to myself Desdemona seated, her sad thoughts wandering far away, gently taking the jewels from her throat, her ears, her fingers; while Emilia uncoils the pearls from her hair, untwists its long plaits, and gathers them for the night in a loose coil at the back of her head. Then, as Emilia kneels at her feet to unfasten the embroidered shoes, Desdemona may put her hand admiringly on Emilia’s head and smooth her fine hair. Meanwhile her thoughts are travelling back to her childhood — perhaps to that mother whose caresses she so early lost and missed, for she had known but few from her cold father: in imagination she may again feel them. Then she remembers Barbara, her mother’s maid, who loved and was forsaken, and who died singing the sad old ditty that “expressed her fortune”—an incident likely to stamp itself deeply in Desdemona’s memory. Little had she thought it was to be her death-song too!

“That song to-night

Will not go from my head. I have much to do,

But to go hang my head all at one side,
And sing it like poor Barbara.

(Sings) ‘The poor soul sat sighing by a
sycamore tree,
Sing all a green willow;

Her salt tears fell from her, and softened
the stones;’

Lay by these:

‘Sing willow, willow, willow;’

Prithee, hie thee; he’ll come anon.

‘Let nobody blame him, his scorn I
approve,’—

Nay, that’s not next. Hark! who is’t
that knocks?

Emil. It’s the wind.

Des. ‘I called on my false love; but
what said he then?

Sing willow, willow, willow.’

... Good night. Mine eyes do
itch:

Doth not that bode weeping?

Emil. ’Tis neither here nor there.

Des. I have heard it said so. . . .

Dost thou in conscience think,—tell me,
Emilia,—

That there be women do abuse their
husbands

In such gross kind?

Emil. There be some such, no question.

Des. Beshrew me, if I would do such
a wrong

For the whole world.

I do not think there is any such woman.”

After listening to some of Emilia’s worldly maxims, she breaks away from the subject by saying—

“Good night, good night: Heaven me
such uses send,
Not to pick bad from bad, but by bad
mend!”

Although such heavy clouds had passed over her happiness, yet Desdemona still loved and trusted, and was not, therefore, altogether sad. To the last she shows herself to be of a hopeful, generous disposition. She knows how to forgive—hopes that what has been the mystery of Othello’s unkindness is perhaps to be explained in the privacy of their chamber, when a word of regret, of remorse from him, will win her fullest pardon. There is something almost sublime in this unshaken love and trust. She falls asleep in it,—for oh, such a rude awakening! The swan had sung her song, and so sinks into her deathbed, although she knew it not.

It is, as we have seen, with some presentiment of sorrow before her that Desdemona goes to bed. The shock of Othello’s accusation has struck to her soul, and shaken her whole being. She will not accuse, or hear him accused of injustice by Emilia, but her idol cannot stand in her imagination where he did. He has human infirmities, and these far greater than she could have

looked for. She can think of no indiscretion of her own, except perhaps suing for their old friend Cassio, at a time when Othello was not in the mood to listen—when State affairs disturbed him. Yet how could he, for so slight a cause, strike her,—disgrace himself and her before the gentlemen who came with despatches from Venice, and afterwards shock her ears with names not to be uttered! and

“Throw such despite and heavy terms
upon her,
As true hearts cannot bear!”

Is this her noble Moor, “so true of mind, and made of no such baseness as jealous creatures are”?

Sad, disappointed as she is at his unkindness, yet her conscience is at rest. Besides, the fit seemed past: he had “looked gentler;” so, trying for more hopeful thoughts, and praying for the help she needed—worn out, too, as she was by unusual and unexpected trouble—she falls asleep.

It is strange it never occurs to Othello that if Desdemona had really been the “cunning” Venetian he thought her, knowing her vileness discovered, she might have found means easily to bribe those who would have hidden her from his just wrath. Emilia was not so scrupulous a woman as to have refused her assistance. Besides, had not the Moor insulted her also, in language the most gross? And would she not have been, at a word from her mistress, glad enough to thwart him, and help her? But he sees this cunning, past all expressing “vile one,” obey his will

without a murmur, go quietly to bed, and finds her, with this load of guilt, as he believes, upon her heart, sleeping the sweet sleep of a child. Well may Emilia exclaim of him, “O gull! O dolt!” He sees nothing but what he is primed to see; in all things else “as ignorant as dirt.” He may have “looked, gentler,” but the poison has done its work; and nothing but the life’s blood of his victim can, as he says, “remove nor choke the strong conception which I do groan withal.” The very serenity of her guileless soul makes against her. “She must die, or she’ll betray more men.” What a scene is this! The powers of good and evil have met in mortal strife!

My friends used to say, as Mr Macready did, that in Desdemona I was “very hard to kill.” How could I be otherwise? I *would not* die dishonoured in Othello’s esteem. This was bitterer than fifty thousand deaths. Then I thought of all his after-suffering, when he should come to know how he had mistaken me! The agony for him which filled my heart, as well as the mortal agony of death, which I felt in imagination, made my cries and struggles no doubt very vehement and very real. My whole soul was flung into the entreaty, but for “half an hour!” “but while I say one prayer!”—which prayer would have been for him. Then, when she hears, for the first time, that Cassio is the supposed accomplice in her guilt, it was as though I spoke for myself in the swift rejoinder—“Send for the man and ask him!”*

* It was a great pleasure to me, when, talking with Mr Carlyle in 1873 about Mr Macready’s revivals, which he spoke of very warmly, he referred in very glowing terms to my Desdemona. Amid much else, he said he had never felt the play so deeply before. One phrase especially struck me—“It quite hurt him to see the fair delicate creature so brutally used.” Would that I could give an idea of his tone and accent, gentle and tremulous, as if a suffering living creature were there before him! I quote from my Diary, November 24, 1873.

Oh that Othello had been so true a friend and husband as to do this before ! But no ; the poison still works, and all she says only serves to augment his fury. When Desdemona hears that Cassio has already lost his life, and that "his mouth is stopped," she naturally weeps the loss of the innocent man, both for his own sake, and because he could alone, she thinks, prove her guiltless. All things conspire against her,—her very tears, her prayers, her asseverations, give countenance to her guilt. She is hurled headlong down the precipice, but, alas ! not killed at once. The strong young life *will* not leave its tenement—the mortal agony is prolonged ; even the dagger's thrust, which is meant in mercy that she may not "linger in her pain," is not enough. The soul *will* not away until it asserts the purity of the sweet casket in which it has been set. It lingers on in pain until the poor body can speak, not, as before, to deaf ears that will not listen, but to those of a sympathising woman. Then, with bitter moans, and broken breath, she stammers out with her last gasp of life — "A guiltless death I die !"

When asked who has done this deed, she says, "Nobody,—I myself." As in the Senate-house, before the Council, she took all the blame upon herself, so here, once more, and with her dying breath, she does the same. I did it all,— "I myself." Blame no one else. "Commend me to my kind lord. Farewell !"

Commend me to my brave warrior ! Of what higher heroism than this—of what nobler love—has history or romance any record ?

Mr Macready was very fine in this scene. There was an impressive grandeur, an elevation even, in his ravings :—

"Whip me, ye devils,
From the possession of this heavenly
sight !
Blow me about in winds ! roast me in
sulphur !
Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid
fire !—
O Desdemona ! Desdemona ! — dead !
dead ! dead !"

As I lay there and listened, he seemed to me to be like a soul in hell, whirling in the Second Circle of the Inferno. And there was a piteousness and a pathos in his reiteration of the loved one's name that went to my very heart. Oh, how it ached, too, for Othello, when his eyes were opened, and he could see and trace the paltry threads by which his soul and body had been ensnared, and when I heard the broken accents of his shame at having sunk so low as to conspire in Cassio's death !

And now the worst is past. The play begins in night with hurry and turmoil ; in night, and what a night, it ends ! There are glorious days of perfect happiness between, but they are few, and the last of them overshadowed with clouds "consulting for foul weather," and giving portentous presage of a terrible catastrophe. But not with storm and turmoil does the last night come. The deep blue sky is studded with "chaste stars," not a breath is stirring, and the lapping of the Levant against the castle rock is alone heard through the stillness ; while "the sweetest innocent that e'er did lift up eye" is cruelly done to death by him that loved her best.

As we "look upon the tragic loading of that bed," we are not without comfort. Truly it is best so. The wrench which had been given to the bond by which these two noble lovers were united could never be repaired on earth. Life could never again have been to them the same as in their brief days

of happiness. The delusion which made Othello mad has been rent from his eyes. He must rejoin her who died with a message for him on her lips. No fear that when they "meet at compt" her look will "hurl his soul from heaven." Her infinite love and pity will think but of his sufferings, and will plead for the forgiveness he dares not ask for himself.

Another victim lies near them, and one who has become almost hallowed by her death.

Whatever may have been Emilia's life before, one cannot but feel for her now. She has truly loved and honoured Desdemona, all the more that to her common nature, and with her rough experience of the world, her mistress reveals a purity and elevation of spirit which she had never before so much as dreamed of. We cannot forgive the part she plays in giving the dropped handkerchief to her husband, instead of returning it to her lady, knowing how she values it,—how she keeps it "always by her to kiss and talk to." Although she has misgivings as to the use her husband means to make of it, yet she gives it to "please his fantasy." She hears Desdemona deplore its loss—"Where should I lose that handkerchief, Emilia?" Yet she can answer, "I know not, madam." She hears the Moor's wild burst of passion when Desdemona owns she "has it not about her;" she sees that its absence has made him jealous; she sees her mistress plunged in grief for its loss,—and yet keeps silence. Nothing can excuse that silence, not even her dread of her husband, brutal as she knew him to be,—this "honest, honest Iago!" *She* could have told them of what metal he was made.

Still, she expiates her wrongdoing with her life. With that

last interview of an hour back in her thoughts, the old ballad still sounding in her ears, when she next sees her sweet mistress it is to find her breathless—dying from a violent and most unnatural death. Well may she say, "Oh, this grief will kill me!" But she has yet to learn what hand she herself has had in this dismal tragedy,—to learn that the handkerchief she stole and gave to her husband, Desdemona had been accused of giving to Cassio. At last she speaks. Though late, she will make what reparation she can, and she does it unflinchingly. Her husband's threats and his commands that she shall go home do not stop her. She entreats of the others leave to speak. "It is right that I obey him, but not now. Perchance, Iago, I shall ne'er go home." No! there is no more home for any of them. What has she more to live for? Better die, as she does by Iago's sword, than drag out a life of remorse for disloyalty to her mistress. That mistress is to her the one sole creature of whom she can now think, and with her dying breath she reiterates to Othello the asseverations of her innocence. "She loved thee, cruel Moor; . . . so speaking as I think, I die, I die;" and her last words are a prayer that she may be laid by her mistress's side.

We have learned from Gratiano that Brabantio is dead. No doubt when he returned to his desolate home, Brabantio would become alive to the reality that his daughter had been its very light and life. Self-reproaches would rise to fill her place and embitter his loneliness, reminding him of all he might have been, but had not been, to her. The maiden, so tender, so unobtrusive, had a magic in her presence not consciously known or felt until lost, but which filled his home and life with blessings, and without

which their charm was gone, and so the old senator died quickly—"pure grief shore his old thread in twain."

Of Cassio what shall be said? The two creatures he most admired and loved have been brought to ruin, and chiefly through him! By his own folly in the brawl with Roderigo he will be apt to think he laid the ground-work for Iago's plot. He will remember that it was Iago who first urged him to appeal to Desdemona to get him reinstated. Nor can he fail to learn how his importunity and her kindness—"Your solicitor shall rather die than give your cause away!"—helped to bring about the woeful catastrophe. If so, what unhappiness is before him! It will take long years to deaden the thought that, but for his fatal weakness, no intercession would have been necessary, and all might have gone well. A great gap has been made in his life. He will never be quite the same man again, though he may be a better and a wiser one. Neither Cyprus nor Venice will hold him long. He will get back, I think, to the books and studies of his youth. Ever present with him will be the image of the victims of the "misadventured piteous

overthrow" in which he had unwittingly played so prominent a part. But for him there will be one "enskyed and sainted" above all her sex,—one who will keep alive for him his faith in woman, his hopes of the hereafter, when the mysteries of this "all-unintelligible world" shall be solved; and that one will be—"the divine Desdemona."

Adieu, my friend! I have told you, as you wished me, what I thought about the three important female characters in Shakespeare to which you believed the least justice had been done. Would I had held your pen to write with! Adieu!—Ever affectionately yours,

HELENA FAUCIT MARTIN.

To MISS GERALDINE E. JEWSBURY.

[Before this letter was despatched, I learned that the dear friend for whom it was intended had sunk into a state of unconsciousness. As it was written, however, so I leave it, again praying forbearance for what in it is merely personal,—the trifles which would have given it a special value in her eyes.—H. F. M., 31 ONSLOW SQUARE, 12th Feb. 1881.]

MR COX'S PROTÉGÉ.

IN TWO PARTS.

II.

THE spring following our Swiss tour witnessed a sad catastrophe. There was agitation in Nicholas Lane, and profound sensation in Lombard Street. Cox & Curries had suspended payment. There might have been whispers of the impending disaster in certain circles, but there had been no general suspicion of the firm's solvency. These private banking houses have one great point in their favour. They publish no periodical balance-sheets, with more or less lucid explanations. Assets may dwindle and deposits be withdrawn, while nobody but the partners and their confidants are the wiser. So the shock took the world by surprise, and no one was more astonished than Abraham. He was brought, of course, to the brink of beggary. It was perhaps as well for his reputation that he had retired from the management when he did; although, probably, had he qualified to remain there, his presence might have kept matters straight. The liquidation brought out scandalous disclosures, and there had been everything short of actual swindling. The brothers Currie had been going far too fast, launching out in reckless speculation. Frederick had married the belle of a former season, the daughter of the most noble the Marquis of Coningsburgh, and had madly plunged with her into whirlpools of fashion; while the steady Theophilus, as it now appeared, had been plunging just as wildly on the Stock Exchange, tempting his embarrassed brother into following his example, till the pair were

hopelessly bogged in a slough of despond of liabilities. If they had not directly made away with their customers' money, they had committed their resources beyond possibility of redemption; and after swallowing the private fortunes of the partners (that of Abraham, of course, included), there was but a prospect of some ten shillings in the pound, according to the most sanguine estimate.

I happened to be in Scotland when the news was announced; and when I arrived in London a few days later, nothing as yet was absolutely known save the collapse of the house and the ruin of the partners. I drove straight to Abraham's rooms in the Albany, where I found him already busied with packing up. He was as calm and serene as I had expected to find him.

"This is very good of you, my dear fellow," he said, as he reached out a hand, "though only what I should have looked for. Indeed, my friends have been dropping in constantly; and whatever people may say of the world, I at least have no reason to abuse it."

"If it pays a percentage on its debts, I am sure it should treat you generously. But I trust things are hardly so bad as they say."

"Bad as they can be, financially speaking; and grieved I am for the creditors. Naturally it is a comfort to know that they can't blame me, and don't blame me; and yet I must feel in a measure responsible. If I had gone in for the business as I ought, it might have

been all very different. Now I can do no more than surrender everything, and hope that the shortcoming may be less than they believe."

"But what do you think of doing yourself? You've never been much accustomed to roughing it."

"High time that I began then," he answered, cheerfully. "As you know, my wants are simple enough, and I'm chiefly sorry for the people I have been helping, and for poor James Lurcher in particular. He has made me somewhat uneasy lately, between ourselves; and I doubt if he is quite able to walk alone yet. I must still keep him in hand for a time, if I can manage that, and then trust to my friends to assist him."

"Ah, by the way, talking of friends," I began, "you can guess, I suppose, why I came straight to look you up; for of course you felt sure of my sympathy, in any case."

"I think I can," he said, frankly. "You meant to do as I hope I should have done by you, and ask me if I needed funds to go on with. And I should have said 'yes,' without a moment's hesitation; but the fact is, you have been anticipated. Another good friend made the offer, and I accepted it. Naturally, the creditors have a claim to everything—plate, books, and furniture will all go to the hammer; and even if I had the right to draw another cheque, I should never have dreamed of touching my bank account. So, just because I intend to be independent, I borrowed £50 to carry on with in the meantime: after that, and with decent economy, I mean that James and I shall make out for ourselves."

I imagine that I looked surprised and somewhat dubious: with all my faith in Abraham's abilities, I knew that neither money-getting nor money-saving had ever been

his strong point. He answered the look with a pleasant smile.

"Well, I always have been a lazy beggar, though I've ridden my pet hobbies hard enough. But I've often fancied that I could do something if I were stirred up; and now and again, by way of testing that, I have written an article that has come out anonymously. And an old ally of mine, the editor of the 'Metropolitan,' came and invited me to become a regular contributor. How that may answer, I don't know. He spoke handsomely; and according to what he says, he pays very handsomely as well. At all events, I have arranged with him for an article on prison management; and if it takes, we are to turn the article into a series. And if they should happen to make a hit, I needn't stick to my last, you know. I shall try my luck in other lines of literature."

He came to dine that night at my club, and over our cigars in the smoking-room we became more confidential than we had ever been. Yet he seemed to hesitate at something he wished to say, and from motives of delicacy I forbore to press him. At last he spoke out: "I don't make much of those money troubles; we shall tide them over somehow, I don't doubt. But there is something that touches me more nearly, weighing on my mind; and my mind will be the easier if I open it to somebody." Then he told the story of his acquaintance with Miss Molyneux. "I daresay you must have thought me rather an idiot about Lurcher: I knew he bored you on that pleasant trip of ours; but the truth is, that I fell in love with him vicariously. And though I begin to fear he is inclined to mischievous company, I feel bound to pull him through if I can. If I appear to doubt him, he may lose self-respect; and then, as

likely as not, he may go straight to the bad."

Some maxims of worldly wisdom rose to my lips, but I did not care to express them. Abraham's motives and his circumstances commanded my respect; and moreover, I was agreeably surprised to see him so wide-awake to the probable character of his slippery *protégé*. So he went on—

"But that by the way. The fact is, that what troubles me the most is, that I did not ask Miss Molyneux to be my wife when I was rich. Heaven knows, it was not because I was rich that I held back. She would have helped me to turn my wealth to account, and would have done honour to any station. But I fancied she did not care for me, and I feared to court a refusal. Now I have every reason to believe that it was that miserable money of mine which came in the way. At least, since she knew I was ruined, she has seemed so different. She has been so gentle, so sympathising. She has appeared to make so much—you won't misunderstand me—of the coolness with which I have taken this facer—not that there is really any credit in that—that I cannot help believing now, she would willingly have said 'yes' had I asked her before. And I am downhearted when I remember the chance I have missed. How can I ask her to share anxiety and poverty, when I was silent while still in possession of my wealth?"

I hardly knew how to answer the question. Abraham's scruples were undoubtedly fine-spun; and his innamorata must have been accustomed to narrow circumstances. But doubtful as I was of his personal prospects, I could hardly in conscience advise him to hamper himself with a wife and the contingent reversion of a rising family.

So I did my best to console him with vague generalities, and said that if he and the lady understood each other, he might wait and trust her till his circumstances were more assured.

He showed unwonted and rather uncharacteristic energy. He did not lose a day in cutting his coat according to the shrunken cloth. The property of Druids' Wood had of course passed from him in the meantime; although, having been strictly entailed by his careful grandfather, the creditors could only lay an embargo on the rents. The mansion was let on lease, and the chambers in the Albany were given up. For himself, Abraham would have preferred to seek cheaper quarters somewhere in town. But in his paternal anxiety for Lurcher's welfare, he thought a town life might lead the youth into temptation. So it was that everlasting James of his who decided his destiny at what proved an exceedingly critical moment. Had he done the best for himself instead of for his *protégé*, there might possibly have been less of a story to tell.

There was a neat little cottage in the Druids' Wood, which his father had built for an old servant. That superannuated pensioner had just died; so Abraham arranged to rent his cottage from the liquidators. It was not every man who would have consented to put his pride in his pocket for the sake of a rather ungrateful dependant, but to Abraham it scarcely seemed a sacrifice. And perhaps in a measure it brought him an immediate reward. Certain it is, that the spirit in which he faced his misfortunes, the ready sacrifice he made of everything, the heartiness with which he helped forward the liquidation, wrought so powerfully on the feelings of the creditors, that general sympathy

was excited in his favour. For the most part, they were men of ample means, and many of them had had long standing connections with his firm. So a resolution was moved, and carried unanimously, that Mr Cox should be requested to accept an annuity of £300, secured as a first charge on the rents of Druids' Wood. And considering the sums which he had handed over in consols and sound available securities, the proposal, although liberal, was not by any means extravagantly so.

Abraham readily accepted it in the spirit in which it was made. If affairs prospered with him, they should be no losers, he said; and he knew that the consciousness of immediate relief would brace him for the battle he intended to fight. Whether an *arrière-pensée* of Miss Molyneux entered into his decision, I have no means of knowing.

Then we heard of him as active and happy. He asked me to come and see him in his cottage, and I went accordingly. "It's not the pride that apes humility," he said, "which makes me hold on in my bit of a cottage here; though, on the strength of the creditors' generosity, I might have moved to a better house. But the fact is, it's far less easy than I thought, buckling myself in the belt of comparative poverty; and I find it impossible at a moment's notice to shut all the floodgates of one's charity. Besides, I have another and more selfish reason;" whereupon his cheery face became so radiant that I understood that other reason at once.

"I could have offered you a tolerable shake-down," he went on, "only I thought you would be more comfortable at the inn." But though I had my bed at the inn, Abraham gave me my dinner; and a very good dinner it was. Perfectly plain and unostentatious, with excellent ale and sound sherry.

Then in the evening he took up the talk very much where he had dropped it in the smoking-room of my club. He went straight to the subject that lay nearest his heart, and told me all about the progress of his love affair.

"When everything was settled as to that £300 a-year, I hurried down to speak to Cecilia. I frankly owned I had been a fool, but told her, at the same time, she was very much to blame for it. My best apology was my evident agitation; for, if she had made me understand that I had mistaken the nature of her sympathy, I believe she would have knocked me out of time altogether. But, to use the poetical language appropriate to the occasion, she saw that my soul was hanging on her lips, and was outspoken as any honest man could desire. After all, 'All's well that ends well,' and I do hope and believe we are nearly come to the end of our troubles. If I had acted on impulse, I should have married her out of hand; but I was bound to think for her as well as myself. That £300 is only an annuity, and an annuity that it is my earnest desire to give up. In any case, I can't ask the creditors to grant a reversion of it to my widow; and so, in common consideration for her, I must see my way a little more clearly."

"And the literary work?"

"Oh, the writing has been answering excellently—more successfully than my most sanguine expectations. You will see the second article on prison administration in the next 'Metropolitan'; and, what is better, I have shown some versatility in securing other strings to my bow."

So Abraham, to my delight, was as hopeful as possible, and apparently with satisfactory reason. Surely there never was a man who

held more lightly to riches, except as a means of helping the happiness of his fellow-creatures. Mr Lurcher, as might have been expected, took a less rosy view of the situation. From the interest his master expressed in him, I had asked, with more heartiness than usual, how he found himself in his new quarters. He would have answered pleasantly if he could, but clearly the effort was too much for him. Lurcher, with all his cunning, had never learned to control himself.

"It's all very well for Mr Cox," he said; "he's satisfied with anything,—the best of gentlemen," he added as an afterthought; "but all this comes uncommonly hard on a poor fellow like me. Lord love you, sir,"—and when once he got on his grievance, it evidently ran away with him on oiled wheels,—“Lord love you, sir, there's nothing to be done here; it's as dull as ditch-water; and when Mr Cox does go to London now and again, he never thinks of taking me with him. Not that I mean,” he repeated hastily, catching himself, “that he is not the best and most generous of gentlemen, but somehow——”

I turned away and cut him short; and this time I could not help speaking to Abraham. It was so obvious that he was nursing a viper in his bosom that he would never warm into gratitude, and a viper that might possibly take an opportunity of stinging him. He only shook his head rather sadly, though his manner showed a trifle more impatience than usual. I had told him nothing new, but had jarred on a nerve that was always sensitive. All he said was, “You mustn't be too hard on James. He was never broken in to bear contradiction, and I had to pull him up sharper than usual before leaving London. The fact was, I had been subscribing for him to some

popular lectures, and a literary institute with reading-rooms which were open in the evenings. I flattered myself that he was most regular in his attendance, when I found out, by the merest accident, that he had been shirking the whole thing systematically. I don't fancy he was after any great harm, but I did feel it my duty for once to speak very severely; and somehow I often have a notion he has borne me a grudge ever since. God knows, I have not deserved it, and I trust kindness will bring him back to a better mind. But in the meantime, this move to the country has put him under steady surveillance. He chafes at it; and perhaps it's not unnatural.”

Of course I burst out indignantly, and, as usual, Abraham quietly silenced me. “I understand all you would say; and I may sometimes have said it to myself. But now you know all the story of Cecilia; and for her sake, if not for his own, I mean to be Lurcher's good genius, in spite of himself.”

The case was hopeless, and I was so much inclined to be angry, that I made a supreme effort to be good-humoured. “You always were the most mulish of animals, Abraham, when anybody tried to pull your head round, when you had taken the bit in your teeth in one of your philanthropical frenzies. So I suppose you must go your own way this time, as usual, and all we can hope is, that you won't come to grief.”

It was a lovely neighbourhood, and beautiful weather, and I was easily tempted to stay on for a few days, so that I saw something of Abraham and his habits. These were considerably changed from what they used to be. I kept my room at the inn, and breakfasted there, and we seldom met before luncheon. The early part of the

day he devoted to pen, ink, and paper; and then we would go for a long stretch over the Downs, returning to a late dinner. "I thought all my bothers would have kept down my weight," he said, with a comical look of depression; "but even that miserable consolation is denied me, and work and worry seem to agree with me." If he did carry more weight than he liked, he certainly looked exceedingly well. I was pleased, too, to see the general cordiality with which he was greeted by his neighbours of all ranks. The labourers in the lanes lifted their hats or grinned to him; hedgers and ditchers knocked off in the middle of their work to throw up their fingers to their foreheads and wait for a kindly recognition; and when we walked down the main street of the borough of Hazlehurst, he had to stand a running fire of salutations like the *sous-préfet* in a French town. After all, it appeared that he might have done much worse than settle among his old friends and acquaintances.

"Yes, it is jolly," he said, in answer to some remark of mine, "to find that my neighbours are as cordial as ever. The one thing that I don't think I could have endured, would have been the thought that any of them doubted my honesty. Then I do believe I must have turned tail and cut the place. I've still got one or two of the old irons in the fire," he went on with a smile. "There now," pointing to a brass plate with his walking-stick, "that door leads to an upper chamber, where we have established the office of the Hazlehurst Provident Society. I set the scheme agoing myself; and now that I live here, I am active manager as well as joint trustee. The society numbers over five hundred members, scattered all about the surrounding parishes—quite a big thing, you see, for a little

place like this. We go from the small tradespeople and respectable mechanics down to the day-labourers on fifteen shillings a-week: we have widows and single women, and all the rest of them. I floated it off by furnishing the office, &c.; but now the funds are most flourishing; and it is a proof the more of the confidence of my worthy neighbours, that they leave a beggared bankrupt like myself to do pretty much as he pleases with their property."

"But you say you have a co-trustee to keep you straight."

"So I have, and I had almost forgotten him. We put our joint names to the cheques, and are supposed to audit the books together. But, *entre nous*, the Rev. Augustine Prior—he is rector of the parish, you know—is rather a man of straw so far as the 'Provident' is concerned. A good old fellow enough, but something more of a Sybarite than I was; and decidedly even a lazier man of business. I urged him to take office,—he took it sadly against the grain; but he gave me solemnly to understand that I should have all the work to do: and for once, to do him justice, he has been as good as his word."

I had an opportunity, by the way, of making the rector's acquaintance before I left, when he insisted upon Mr Cox bringing his friend to dinner. "I seldom go into society now," said Abraham, "but Prior has been at the rectory for the last dozen years, and was our nearest neighbour as well as our clergyman. He was constantly dining at Druids' Wood in my father's time, and now he insists on repaying our former hospitality. It is the more creditable to him, that I don't think he likes me much, and I never was especially fond of him."

We had a capital dinner at the

rectory, with undeniable port and madeira. The Rev. Augustine, a hale rubicund man of nearly sixty, was all that was civil; and yet there seemed a touch of the subacid under his joviality, owing partly perhaps to his constitutional tendency to gout. I might have been mistaken, but I fancied I could detect the reason of any repulsion that might exist between him and his benevolent parishioner. The rector had a conscience, Sybarite as he was; and he appeared to feel Abraham's philanthropical activity a reproach to him. At least, when my friend, as he was apt to do, turned the conversation to anything of the kind, the subject was plainly unpalatable to his host. And once the rector gave a snarl, and almost a snap, when his guest made some passing allusion to his occupations at the office of the "Provident."

In these bustling times the paths of the closest friends often trend widely apart, and for months I had seen nothing of Abraham, though I had read his articles in the 'Metropolitan' with interest. Then there came a letter from him. He was getting impatient to be married out of hand, and requested me to act as one of his trustees. To that I had no objection, the less so as I feared that my friend could have very little to settle. When I met him, he explained. He had not a shilling of capital, and for that very reason felt bound in prudence to make provision for his wife and for a possible family. Fortunately the liberality of the creditors gave him the means of doing so. He proposed to engage under his marriage contract to insure his life for a certain sum, by annual payment, amounting to considerably more than a third of his annuity. I approved his forethought, but sug-

gested that perhaps he overdid it. Mr and Mrs Cox must live in the meantime: if he decided to marry under present circumstances, they might as well trust something more to Providence. He could always lay by something after insuring moderately. He assured me that he had weighed the matter deliberately, and gave me to understand that he thought it right to abide by his resolution. His literary efforts had scarcely been so remunerative latterly, though he still had good grounds of confidence. Cecilia was ready to cast in her lot with him, and they were prepared to face certain privations; but life was uncertain, and it was incumbent on him to take care that she was never actually reduced to penury. If he did not insure as he proposed, he dare not marry, and that was the long and the short of it. So there seemed no more to be said, and I agreed to assist him in his arrangements.

But there are always slips between the cup and the lip. Miss Molyneux had an illness, and the wedding was put off. Even after she was pronounced out of danger, her recovery was slow, and I could read in Abraham's notes to me how much he suffered. Nothing could have so strongly proved the intensity of his passion, as the way in which it upset his constitutional composure. A turn of fortune's wheel had reduced him from wealth to poverty. I do not believe that it touched his appetite or cost him a single night of sleep; but, as it came out afterwards, suspense and anxiety shook him altogether. For once he lost flesh, and, what was more of a trouble to him, the literary ground he had been gradually gaining. In place of compliments and cheques, editors sent him back his contributions. Then his eccentricities became more marked in the

eyes of his neighbours. He would work hard against the collar all day, and go to bed to find his night broken. Exercise had become indispensable to him; so he would take his walks about after night-fall, coming back to the cottage at most unseasonable hours. And all the time his modest bankers' balance was going to the bad; and probably it might have been better in the end had they been less ready to let him overdraw. For he would persist in the unselfish luxury of keeping that man Friday of his; and Lurcher could only be charmed into amiability by being surrounded with the little comforts his master denied himself. Besides, there were subscriptions that could not be knocked off, and, as I need hardly say, it was difficult for Mr Cox to refuse any direct appeal to his charity. He wrote me in low spirits,—an unsatisfactory symptom with a man like him, more especially as his Cecilia was to make him happy in a few weeks. But in the meantime he said that he was going a little walking expedition in the west, and he fully expected it would set him on his legs again.

I had been startled and astonished when I heard of his ruin, but that was nothing to the shock I was to experience now. Glancing carelessly over the evening paper, "Hazlehurst Provident Society" caught my eye as heading to a paragraph, and the paragraph ran thus:—

"CHARGE OF FORGERY AND EMBEZZLEMENT. — Profound sensation has been created in East Surrey by rumours of forgery and embezzlement of funds, in connection with the management of the Hazlehurst Provident Society. What makes the scandal more painful is the fact that suspicion has attached to a well-known philanthropist, who

founded the Society in question, freely contributing to the funds, and who has since had entire control of its finances. Until recently a man of princely means, he was ruined by the stoppage of the well-known private banking firm of which he was a member. It would appear that, from confidential communications made to the police and to his co-trustee during a temporary absence, investigations were made into the books and banking account of the Society, which led to the disclosure of serious defalcations. Warrants were most reluctantly issued for the arrest of the gentleman in question, and we understand that he is already in custody. We need hardly add that the news has caused intense excitement in a neighbourhood where he has always been held in esteem approaching to veneration. There is a general desire that he may be in a position to explain the circumstances which have forced those summary proceedings on the magistrates. We must add, at the same time, that great indignation is expressed, among the numerous depositors in the Society, who are, for the most part, in the humblest ranks of society."

I read the paragraph over again, rubbed my eyes, and asked if I were dreaming. What could it all mean, and could it possibly be a *mauvaise plaisanterie*? That could hardly be: the details were too circumstantial; there was no mistaking the identity of its subject; nor would any editor, with actions of libel before his eyes, lightly give currency to anything so compromising. Absurd, incredible as was the charge, Abraham must have got himself into a hobble with that confounded philanthropical simplicity of his. Of course, he could clear himself, and all would be explained; but, in the meantime, the

humiliation would sting him deeply. To think of him under restraint in one of the jails he had so often visited with such single-minded motives. I knew not where my friend might be: probably he was already at liberty again, on bail or otherwise. I dashed into a hansom, drove to the Waterloo station, and took a ticket for Hazlehurst.

It was James who opened the door to me at the cottage,—James looking haggard, anxious, and careworn, with profound depression on his countenance, which became him well enough in the circumstances. At first, indeed, his sorrow seemed to impede his utterance, but as he warmed to the topic, he became voluble enough. Ah yes, it was all too true. It was hard to tell how the police had come to their knowledge. Anyway, some blackguard who had got at his poor master's secret had gone and given them the office. Mr Abraham, as ill luck would have it, was not only from home, but knocked over. He had sprained his ankle down in Devonshire, and was confined to the sofa in the inn at Clovelly. James believed the officers were off and after him, and had heard that they were taking him to the jail at Guildford.

I heard him to an end, and then burst out, “—— it sir, as it appears to me, you really believe your master guilty.”

Mr Lurcher shrunk back, put in bodily terror by my vehemence. He rallied, and shook his head sadly, with that jerky, deprecating manner of his.

“Surely, sir, you should know best, and I hope from my heart it may be so.” He was rather ungrammatical and redundant, but that was only natural. “All I know is, that them as should know,—that is to say, the superintendent of the police, and the Rev. Mr

Prior,—do say that ‘the circumstances of his guilt would unhappily appear almost conclusive;’ and them are as near as possible the very words they both used. God grant the police and the parson may be wrong: he’s been a good master to me.”

That Lurcher was a hypocritical scoundrel I had no doubt in the world. That he was by no means so deeply sorrow-stricken as he pretended was likewise plain enough. But I saw no immediate reason to think much worse of him than in ordinary; so having extracted all he apparently had to tell, I struck out into the lanes, and walked off to the rectory.

The Rev. Mr Prior was at home, and would see me.

“Sad business this! sad business!” he ejaculated, as he came forward to shake hands. “Sad changes, indeed, since you were last under my roof, and who would have believed it of Cox, of all men in the world.”

“But you don’t mean to tell me that you believe it, Mr Prior,—you who must know him as intimately as anybody. Why, if his father rose out of the grave to assure me of it, I should tell his father he was a liar and calumniator.”

The rector, like Lurcher, looked rather alarmed, and perhaps it was because of that he waived the compliment I had paid indirectly to his sagacity and charity.

“My good sir, I honour your fervour, and would willingly have excused it, had excuse been necessary. The more so that, in different circumstances, I should have felt at least as strongly as you.”

“And now?”

“And now, most painful as my conviction is, it is being forced upon me by evidence that is almost irresistible. You may believe how strong that evidence is, when I tell

you that in spite of the *prima facie* improbability of the charge, and the natural leanings of the bench to the prisoner, he has been formally committed, and bail has been refused. I have just come back from the court-house at Guildford."

I sank back in a chair: I felt as if in a dream, that grim reality seemed so wildly extravagant. The rector rung for wine; and when the servant left the room, I had recovered composure enough to ask about the evidence. Mr Prior was quite ready to be explicit. He appeared to think that he was being put on his defence in his turn.

"The case lies in small compass. Cox and I, as you know, were joint-trustees of that unlucky Friendly Society. I told him, when he insisted on starting it, that he was brewing trouble for both of us, though I little thought what shape the trouble was to take. To my shame be it spoken, and very foolishly, I left it to him to do all the work. I trusted him as implicitly as everybody else did. He left the other day for a walking tour; he told me he should be from home for less than a week, and that he had put the society's money matters in train during his absence. The very next day I received an anonymous letter. It simply warned me to see to the funds, for my partner had been playing fast and loose with them, and the books would not bear balancing.

"I set it down as the stupid joke of some half-educated man. I never gave the matter a second thought, when that afternoon our head policeman called on me. Then he showed me another communication couched in almost identical terms. Still I would have pooh-poohed one and the other; but he insisted, for his own sake, on some

notice being taken of them. So to satisfy him I got Cox's probable address from his servant, and the policeman was quite content that in the first place we should communicate with him by letter. He really doubted him as little as I did. There was no reply. As it turned out afterwards, Cox had sprained his ankle, and was laid up short of his intended destination. Meanwhile reports had got abroad, and depositors in the Society were excited. The police became uneasy too. So, chiefly to satisfy them, I used my duplicate key to open the safe at the Society's rooms. The books appeared to balance satisfactorily; but on sending to the bankers in London—Cox had expressed a preference for banking there—we found that considerable sums had been withdrawn in three separate cheques. There was no note of these drafts in the account-books at Hazlehurst, and the cheque-book was missing."

"Some one has been tampering with them in Mr Cox's absence."

"So I imagined. But we discovered from the bankers that the three cheques had been presented previous to the date of Cox's departure—the last by himself in person on the very day that he had passed through town. I need not add that my signature must have been forged to all the three. Whereupon the police insisted that it became their duty to apply for an arrest-warrant forthwith. I had nothing to urge to the contrary, and that was done; but as a *dernier ressort*, and to prevent the scandal obtaining publicity, I proposed that we should break into our friend's repositories and make a search for the missing cheque-book. It might have afforded such negative presumption of his innocence as to justify delay, and prevent exposure. We found it, and, unfor-

tunately, to all appearance, it contained conclusive evidence of the triple offence. Since the last draft to which I had really set my name, three cheques had been torn from the counterfoils, and on each counterfoil, in Mr Cox's handwriting, was a pencilled memorandum of the sums that have been abstracted."

"He would never have been ass enough to make entries of the kind."

"Who knows? How do you explain it otherwise? It seems that a gold key which opens his *bureau* hangs at his watch-chain. Experienced criminals have committed greater oversights; and, moreover, even according to the theory of the authorities, he may have taken the money with the intention of replacing it—having no reason to apprehend speedy detection."

"Abraham never took the money," I began.

"Pardon me, Mr Hooper. You forget the cashier who asserts positively that Mr Cox came to the bank in person. It would be all unlikely enough with any ordinary person, I grant; but perhaps hardly so much so in the case of one so decidedly eccentric as our acquaintance—especially on the presumption that he intended repayment."

"Mistaken identity, no doubt,—Abraham never did it; and yet the money has been drawn. Who drew it? The obvious alternative suggests the informer; otherwise, how can you explain his having penetrated the secret?"

"It may be difficult to suggest an explanation; and yet explanations are possible and conceivable. It has occurred to me as quite intelligible that Cox might have been borrowing from Peter to give to Paul; that, in his straitened circumstances, he might have been

levying a forced loan to forward some of his works of benevolence. Then supposing a sophistry that quieted his conscience, taken in connection with the cogent evidence against him, we may plainly infer his culpability, with no great want of charity either."

"He never drew those cheques," I persisted, doggedly, though my apprehensions for his fate had grown decidedly graver since I saw how circumstances arrayed themselves against him. "By the way,—that rascally anonymous denunciation—you haven't got it by you, I suppose?"

"Oh yes. The magistrates, after examining it, returned it to my custody. You are very welcome to see what you can make of it."

A suspicion had crossed my mind; but there was nothing in that sheet of note-paper to confirm it—except that, in my opinion, not being an expert, there was no attempt at disguise in the handwriting, which seemed to prove that the writer had no fear of being traced; or else, and more probably, was indifferent on the subject.

I bade the Rector a cool good-bye,—and yet, perhaps, it was unreasonable to blame him. He was never friendly with Abraham, as I had been; indeed there had been something like an antipathy between the two: the *prima facie* evidence of guilt, as he had said, was certainly strong; and after all, his softened theories of the offence brought it more nearly within the limits of the credible. The Rector's unfavourable opinion would have weight, no doubt,—as of course he would figure prominently for the prosecution. But what struck me with a yet gloomier foreboding was the fact that he expressed public opinion. If Abraham's intimates and neighbours gave him up at once,

what was to be expected from the judgment of the world? And the poor fellow himself,—what must he not be suffering!

The wings of eager friendship wafted me to Guildford jail,—or, more prosaically, I made my way thither as fast as the arrangements of the railway company permitted. There seemed nothing but shocks or surprises in store for me. I expected to find Abraham overwhelmed by sorrow and humiliation; and he was not merely serene, but positively cheerful,—surely a most remarkable instance of the *mens sibi conscia recti*. No doubt his apartment had been made as comfortable as circumstances admitted. But there were the grated windows, opening on the blank wall, and the locked and bolted door; and the captive was a cripple into the bargain. When he rose to meet me, with outstretched hands, he came hobbling across the floor by help of a stick. I was more embarrassed than I had expected to feel; for before his unaffected cheerfulness, condolence seemed not only out of place, but cruel. If he bore his misfortunes so calmly, it was worse than useless to remind him of how they impressed other people. When he came to talk, however, it was clear that he was fully alive to that; and if he bore up with philosophical or Christian fortitude, it was only because he had other sources of consolation. After answering some inquiries as to his accident, he went straight to the point.

“You are surprised at seeing me take all this so easily, and I don’t wonder. Up to only twenty-four hours ago, when they brought me here, I was in a very different frame of mind. Fortunately, I never was an excitable man, or I do believe I should have been worked into a brain-fever. You may fancy what

it was to be arrested as a felon, without a word or hint by way of warning. At first I was stupefied; but when the stupefaction wore off, my blood seemed boiling at fever-heat, and my pulse was beating time at the double. The officers were civil and considerate, but they could not soften the reality. The cruel extravagance of the accusation made me lose all power of self-control, so far at least as my feelings were concerned—for I hope I showed but little of them—and the idea that I had ceased to be a free agent maddened me. Reason, and I hope religion, asserted themselves after a time; but if I have an enemy, as it appears I have, I would never wish him to endure the half of what I suffered on that terrible journey.”

I could say nothing. I only pressed his hand.

“They made their arrangements to bring me here after dusk. The prison authorities were courteous, even kind, but I fancied I saw a marked change in their manner. They showed me into my—my cell, and left me. Then I had a visitor, and you can guess who it was. She had heard of my misfortune—Heaven knows, the news of it seems to have spread fast—and she hurried to Guildford, that she might be ready to console me. From that moment all was different. It sounds commonplace to say she brought sunshine into the cell, but that was just what it was, and she left the sunshine in my heart. Not even to you can I tell what passed; but I never knew what it was to be happy before. She will not hear for a moment of anything but a speedy explanation. I know not how that may be, though she has strengthened my hopes that Providence will help us. But while Cecilia is what she is, I care little

for the world. The man who has found such a treasure would be ungrateful if he grumbled at anything; and with such an example of pluck in a girl, I should feel myself a coward if I quailed,—though the thought of being separated from her in ignominy and infamy adds another horror to the possibility of a conviction. I told her that when you came I should send you to see her. You will lay your heads together and talk matters over, and then come and tell me what you think best to be done. You will find her there;” and he gave me the address.

I might have fallen in love with Miss Molyneux myself, if my fortunate friend had not anticipated me. I had seldom seen a face, I had never met a character, that impressed or touched me more. If she had borne up nobly on her visit to her lover, it was evidently at the cost of breaking down afterwards; and it was no wonder that overstrained nature relieved itself. Her face showed the traces of tears, and there was a melancholy shadow on her delicate features. Yet the clouds lightened and lifted as she began to speak,—as she expressed her womanly indignation at the atrocity of the charge, and her assurance that her betrothed would be righted triumphantly. Yet it was easy to see she had been schooling herself to believe in the best, and that it cost a continual effort to keep her confidence. No wonder, when so much was at stake, and when the innocent had been convicted before on evidence that appeared far less conclusive. The imminence of the danger got the better of false shame, and she spoke of her devotion to Abraham with a simple unreserve, which made me feel again that he might be more to be envied than pitied.

Even while she spoke hopefully, and discussed the elucidation of the affair with an intelligence that showed full command of her faculties, the starting tear and the quivering lip would sometimes belie that brave composure. Yet though I listened, I confess I was rather *distracted*, since I had to approach a very delicate subject. Although I had not an iota of direct proof, I could not help connecting Lurcher with the rascality. But such conduct on his part would be so blackly ungrateful as to raise additional presumptions against its probability. Naturally she was prepossessed in favour of her *protégé*; it was she who had given him in charge to Abraham, and he, according to that theory of mine, had been the innocent cause of all this complication of misery. But it was no use hesitating or beating about the bush, and I broke my suspicions as gently as possible.

At first she listened incredulously, almost indignantly. That I was prepared for; and I persisted quietly in setting forth the grounds of my ill opinion of Mr Lurcher, reminding her that, in the course of our long Continental expedition, I had really had better opportunities of judging him than she. Although not convinced, she was so far shaken that she heard me with more of the impartiality of a judge. And as my suggestions offered a ray of intelligible hope, she seemed to incline to them rather against her will. No doubt Abraham's acquittal was everything to her; but just because she desired it so ardently, she dreaded the more doing injustice to anybody.

“Well, Mr Hooper,” she said at last, with kind expressions which I need not repeat, “I believe it will be best to act as you propose. So long as we do nothing positively

wrong, we must leave no single stone unturned. As for me, I am afraid my wishes may blind my judgment. I welcome anything that offers a chance of clearing up the mystery, and yet that suspicion seems too detestable. But if the business be delicately managed, Lurcher need know nothing of it. If he be what Abraham and I have believed him, he could never get over so terrible an injustice."

Innocent or not, I held to the belief that Mr Lurcher's feelings would not be grievously outraged, even by the detection of the little arrangement I proposed. That he might have strong personal reasons for objecting to surveillance in any case, I felt no doubt in the world. Naturally I hinted nothing of the kind to Miss Molyneux, but, taking leave of her as if we had been old acquaintances, returned promptly to London.

If Miss Molyneux was slow to suspect evil of her fellow-creatures, that was not by any means the weakness of Mr Inspector Quickett. I happened to have transacted business with that eminent detective before, and had reason to know that he had really much of the shrewdness with which his fraternity are popularly credited. He threw in occasional questions, and was guarded as to committing himself; but it was clear that he shared my doubts about Lurcher. This was a sensational case besides, and there was credit to be won by clearing an eminent philanthropist from so damaging an accusation. When our interview was at an end, I had the satisfactory assurance that the interests of my friend were in capable hands, and that the vanity of the detective was effectually enlisted.

When I saw him again a certain amount of progress had been made,

although not altogether so much as I could have desired. But the bent of my suspicions had been more or less confirmed, and the detective's zest in the quest had been stimulated. He was more communicative, and more confidential.

"You are right upon one point, sir,—that I'm persuaded of. If Lurcher be at the bottom of the business, he must have a pal he has been using as a cat's-paw. I showed the anonymous letter" (Mr Prior had parted with it on a formal receipt) "to the experts in handwriting. I don't think much of them in a general way; but in this case, at all events, they were spontaneously unanimous. Lurcher never wrote it, and the handwriting was never disguised. We have been making inquiries about Lurcher in the neighbourhood, and he is a bad one, and no mistake. He was never out of the pot-house when his master's back was turned, and you may swear he has not changed his habits, now that Mr Cox is under lock and key. What we must do is to get Lurcher to London, if you can any way manage it. Looking after him in town, we should find out who his friends are."

It was evidently the occasion for a pious fraud. Abraham would rather have been sentenced to Portland than thrust his *protégé* in the way of temptation. So I must own that, though results might have given me reason for repentance, I seethed the kid in its mother's milk. I took Abraham by his finer feelings—not making Miss Molyneux a participator in the intrigue—and warned him that James, left in charge of his cottage, seemed exceedingly likely to go straight to the devil.

"Ah, yes, poor fellow! I ought to have thought of that. He will be terribly cut up by all this

trouble of mine, and may be taking to evil company or drink for distraction."

"That's just what I fear," I remarked, jesuitically. "In every way he would be safer in town." And that I may be acquitted of playing the part of a Judas—the thought of Miss Molyneux's interest in Jim would have made that impossible to me—I may explain the arrangement I had to propose to Cox. I had seen a common friend who was in business as a solicitor—told him the whole story, and prevailed on him to offer Mr Lurcher an engagement. If the object of our suspicions acted honestly and behaved decently, he would be only a gainer. If, on the contrary, he were really the criminal I believed, in all probability we should catch him tripping.

His habits, as I had surmised, bore supervision but indifferently. Mr Quickett, when I met him again, had an exceedingly unfavourable report to make.

"He is always hanging about public-house bars, and smoking and drinking in public-house parlours; he is hand-in-glove with a very shady lot, but the circle of his acquaintance is so extensive that it is hard to spot any man of them in particular. They are mostly the sort of broken-down scamps that would be quite capable of writing a creditable letter, but then none of them could ever be mistaken for Mr Cox; and if he never presented that cheque at the bank, of course we must prove mistaken identity."

"You have seen the clerk, by the way?"

"Yes; and so far it is all straightforward enough, worse luck. He honestly believes what he is ready to swear. He can recall the circumstances distinctly. It tells some-

what in favour of your view, that the cheque was presented on a dark afternoon, when the clouds were working up for a thunder-storm—in fact, it is the flashes of the lightning that impresses it all on the clerk's memory. But then, notwithstanding the unlikelihood of the offence, he maintains that there was no possibility of his being mistaken."

"He recognised the voice?"

"The very question I asked. No; as to that, he remembers nothing. But then, as he says, if he did inquire, 'How will you have it?' the answer is mumbled more often than not, so that the voice goes for very little. You may reckon, at any rate, that the man is honest, and will take his oath positively to what he believes."

I am nonplussed, and I showed it. By way of comforting me, I suppose, Mr Quickett resumed—"After all, you did us a good turn, sir. In keeping my eye on Lurcher and his movements, I dropped down upon another gentleman that we wanted."

"Indeed!"

"Tom Oliver his name is, and quite a bird of a feather with Lurcher. But though they are always frequenting the same house of call, I can't find out that they had any acquaintance. Otherwise Mr Oliver, who has half-a-dozen of *aliases*, might have well been mixed up in a matter of the kind. The warrant we have against him was for passing himself off among the old ladies at Hampton Court Palace as a missionary from the Sandwich Islands, come home for subscriptions; and as his offence was committed in Surrey, we've sent him to keep Mr Cox company at Guildford."

Quickett had nothing else to say

about the pseudo-missionary, but, somehow, I fancied he might be thinking all the more. If it were so, his subsequent investigation led to nothing, and the day of trial was drawing near. We had demonstrated Mr Lurcher to be a dissipated scoundrel, but we had done nothing to turn our suspicions even into presumption; so I spared Abraham's feelings by keeping silence on the subject. Everything had been done that could be done. We had retained eminent counsel, instructed by an experienced criminal solicitor; and we had the satisfaction, besides, of believing that these gentlemen were persuaded of the innocence of their unfortunate client,—a considerable point in his favour, no doubt. But then we had to convince a judge and a jury; and unless he were dismissed from the bar "without a stain upon his character," a verdict of acquittal would be little better than conviction.

It promised to be a most sensational *cause célèbre*. Being the height of summer, it was the dull season in politics, and the public were delighted to have something to talk about. The scandal-mongers might have been busy, but scandal had nothing to lay hold of. The worst they could say of my unlucky friend, was that he had always been extremely singular and eccentric; and his eccentricities were ingeniously exaggerated and distorted. London correspondents of country papers related remarkable anecdotes without the slightest foundation in fact. Minute biographical studies of his career were industriously worked up and disseminated. Some of these did him justice, and were calculated to heighten the very general sympathy. Others, with an excessive affectation of candour,

did their best to turn his benevolence against him. And it seemed odd that not a few of the serious journals appeared most inclined to be hard on an erring brother. For, though from charity, and a fear of actions for libel, they declined to prejudge his guilt and condemn him, yet, all the same, they hastened to draw morals from his case which were inconsistent with any theory of his innocence. In short, when Guildford assizes came on, public excitement had been wrought up to the highest pitch. The court-house was crowded to the doors with a galaxy of philanthropy and fashion: noblemen, magistrates, members of Parliament, and magnates of the Lombard Street aristocracy, were accommodated with seats on the judicial bench; a crack staff of reporters had been commissioned by the metropolitan press; and ladies, provided with luncheon-baskets and embroidered pocket-handkerchiefs, had been early admitted by special orders.

To me, while awaiting the appearance of the accused, the interest centred in a single figure. She sat in a simple dress of sombre colour, by the side of her father: her face was covered with a thick veil, so that I could only guess at the strain she was supporting: and, with characteristic thoughtfulness, she had chosen to place herself where she could not catch the eye of the prisoner. He would need all his self-control, and she would do nothing to unman him. When he was guarded to the dock by the officer, I saw her shrink and draw together. As for him, he cast one rapid glance backwards to the spot where he knew she must be sitting: then he drew himself up, and looked round the court-house with perfect composure. His ap-

pearance provoked a murmur of sympathy: and it was repeated, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the judge, when, in the clearest and most unshaken words, he uttered his "Not guilty, my lord."

It promised to be a remarkable *cause célèbre*; and so it proved. The counsel for the Crown, although they did their duty, involving the accused in a chain of circumstantial evidence that was only too artistically welded, clenched the successive links almost apologetically. Neglecting nothing that could make against the prisoner, they appeared as if for once they would have welcomed a defeat. The learned gentleman who conducted the defence decided to dispense with witnesses to character; and there it was clear the court was with him. When I caught the eye of the benevolent old judge, resting with unfeigned compassion on Abraham—though I had not doubt he would be impartial—I was assured he would not be austere. Yet, as the proceedings dragged their length along, I could only forebode one conclusion, and hope gradually died away. The inculpatory evidence was just as I have outlined it. The cashed cheques had been forged. That Mr Prior swore to. For a year or more, no one but Abraham had the handling of the funds of the society. The book from which the missing cheques had been taken had been found, with the counterfoils duly filled in, in a bureau that only opened to the key which always hung at Abraham's watch-chain. What the prosecution chiefly relied upon, was the cheque he had presented in person. And as to that, he could prove no *alibi*. On the contrary, his counsel admitted, by his instruction, that he had not only been in London that

day, but in the city. He added, however, that he had never been in Lombard Street, though undoubtedly he had passed in front of the Mansion House. No attempt was made to shake the cashier's testimony in cross-examination. All that was elicited in favour of the prisoner was the darkness of the day in question, which raised some faint probability that the man of business might have been honestly mistaken.

Lurcher had been called to prove that his master always carried the key of the bureau about his person. I had hoped he might have been subjected to severe cross-examination, but that satisfaction was denied me. I learned afterwards that Abraham himself had expressed himself decidedly on the point, and refused to be overruled. A question or two, however, was slipped in, and, as I had reason to hope, thrown in with intention. Should the future bring Lurcher's complicity in this infamy to light, they would suffice to found an indictment for perjury.

When the jury withdrew, there was a period of suspense, which, by encouraging illusive hopes, seemed simply to be gratuitous torture. Persuaded of the truth as I was, I felt that only one verdict was possible. It was—"Guilty, but strongly recommended to mercy;" and the jury were careful to explain the recommendation. It was not only on account of the culprit's antecedents, but because there was every reason to suppose that he must have had the intention of replacing the money. They might have added, perhaps, that they had still doubts as to his guilt, though there was no getting over the strength of the evidence.

The judge listened to the foreman with visible emotion. Then

he said that, under the circumstances, he would defer sentence till the morrow. It was wisely done, and kindly meant; and yet I felt that I would have rather, for my own part, he had helped my unfortunate friend to a happy despatch. I hardly dared look at Abraham. When I did bend forward, his back was turned, and he was gazing, with intense self-forgetfulness, in the direction of Miss Molyneux. When the court had emptied, and the prisoner had been removed, I saw her totter to her feet by the help of her father, who gently led her out of court. As I learned afterwards, she fainted in the passage. I don't know what the ordinary rules may be in such circumstances, but I easily obtained access to my friend. If he were guilty, it was a black case of embezzlement, and yet everybody seemed to feel kindly to him. Perhaps the prison authorities were unconsciously mystified, and could hardly make sure of their real opinion. The interview alarmed as much as it distressed me. Not that Cox did not bear up manfully, though the blow had been crushing. Hope had doubtless been stronger than he fancied, and now he was half-stunned. He was striving hard to divert his thoughts, and yet whenever they returned to the reality, his face was wrung by a spasm of anguish. The effort at distraction could not be sustained, and if he began to brood, the consequences might be of the gravest. He had always been used to an active life, to the open-air, and the freshness of the country. Confined in a solitary cell, or in the company of the lowest convicts, he would lose heart and health altogether.

If he thought of himself and his own future, he only spoke of them in relation to Miss Molyneux. He

made anxious inquiries as to how she was bearing the blow; and though I stretched my conscience to give a reassuring report, he evidently trembled from the effects of the shock. "And the life-long separation, when we were on the eve of being happy!" he added—"and when I knew the value of the treasure some villain has robbed me of." Before or afterwards, it was the only outbreak of anger at his secret enemy that I ever heard from him. It roused my less Christian feelings to the uttermost. I vowed vengeance, not for the first time, and swore to myself, that though Quickett might be at fault, I should persevere in our unsuccessful quest, and leave no stone unturned.

That we should succeed, sooner or later, I hardly doubted, and so I said to him, with the fulness of conviction. What I feared was that success might come too late, and that his character might be rehabilitated when the mischief was irreparable. He made an effort to seem to believe me, that he might send me away in a happier frame of mind; and indeed I was downcast enough when I tried to bid him a cheerful good night.

I did not care to go straight to Miss Molyneux, though I promised to see her again that evening. I was anxious to be about and doing; yet what was there to be done? I thought I might as well speak to Quickett, if he were visible. Of course he was at Guildford, in waiting upon Mr Lurcher, and we had arranged for occasional meetings at the little public-house he was patronising. The landlady told me that "Mr Thompson" was out; so I turned my steps towards the country, and started for a sharp walk. In such a frame of mind as mine, the restlessness of excitement takes various forms. Far from bringing

relief, exercise worried me, and turning out of the lane, and slipping through a gap in the hedge, I threw myself on the grass under an oak tree. Mechanically I pulled out a pipe and filled it, but the fumes of the tobacco were anything but soothing. They associated themselves somehow with the Maine and the Danube, — with times when I had been smoking placidly with Abraham in the snuggery in his little cottage, and when a cheerful future had been stretching before him, in spite of the clouds of his financial misfortune. And thence, by a natural train of association, my mind followed up the career of Mr Lurcher, tracking his turnings and windings like a ferret, and scenting out particular instances of his ingratitude. I cannot say that I became more certain of his infamy than I had been before; but I can say, and I feel little shame in the confession, that I hated him with more concentrated hatred than ever.

I suppose "talk of the devil" and "think of the devil" may mean pretty much the same thing. The sound of voices disturbed me in my reverie, — the voices of a man and a woman, who were coming along the lane in angry altercation; and the voice of the man was unmistakably that of Lurcher, though the lady had the lion's share of the conversation.

"Hush! For God's sake, don't speak so loud. You don't know who may be hearing."

The pair seemed to come to a standstill behind the hedge.

"And I don't care neither. I say again, you must let us have money for Tom's defence, or it will be the worse for you."

She went on in the same strain in a shrill falsetto, and her companion had to raise his own tones to make himself heard at all. Yet

he was protesting in a plaintive and imploring whine. "So help me, I have hardly change for a sovereign, and I don't know where to turn for more. He sent me money only last week, and it's gone, and I've passed pretty nigh everything I dare part with up the spout."

"You knew where to find money before."

"That's over, as you know very well. I wish——"

But what the rascal wished I did not hear, for they moved on, and he spoke more quietly. For once I played the spy, and peeped round the corner of the hedge, but I only caught a glimpse of the back of the woman. Nor did I think it worth while to follow. I should surely get news as to the lady from Quickett, and now I was more anxious to see him than ever. And this time I did meet "Mr Thompson" sauntering along leisurely at the entrance to the town. He was attired in decent black, and looked like a respectable lawyer's clerk.

"You've met them, I suppose," he said, by way of greeting, for there was no mistaking my impatience and excitement. "Yes: it's a good point gained. He's in communication with Oliver's wife, and the pair have fallen out. Oliver was to be put on his trial to-morrow, but he has been regularly knocked over for the last two days—a sharp bout of a feverish attack. They will apply to put off the trial—all the more that they have got none of the ready to defend him."

"Ah, I understand," I exclaimed, with rising hope.

"Yes," said Quickett. "That's it! Oliver has been pressing Lurcher for the needful, and Lurcher can't make it forthcoming. I know he's as hard up as may be, but

Oliver won't credit that: in fact, I took the precaution of having him informed to the contrary."

"And——"

"And when scoundrels like them take to quarrelling, honest men may come by their own. Besides, for an hour or two this morning Oliver was wandering a bit in his mind, and I managed to pick up something he dropped, from the warders in attendance. I believe if we could only make him speak, we should get to the bottom of the plant."

Naturally the news threw me into a rapture of delight, though second thoughts rather dashed me. "Ay, if we can make him speak; but there's the difficulty. He is not likely to criminate himself, even for the pleasure of being revenged on Lurcher."

"I don't know. He's in a deuce of a hobble without that other business; and setting aside the grudge he may have at Lurcher, he may think that making a clean breast of it will help him. There's another thing. Hearing he was ill, Miss Molyneux went to visit him yesterday, and took him some oranges and things. Of course to-day she had other fish to fry. And when she fainted this evening on coming out of court, Oliver's wife happened to be near, and helped to bring her round. Bad lots as they both may be, they would most likely rather do her a good turn than not. But if you are to see the lady to-night, you had better not breathe a word of all this."

I agreed with him there; but when I did see Miss Molyneux, I found it very hard to keep the promise I had made. In the reaction from the day's excitement, and with the shock of the verdict, she was thoroughly cast down and hopelessly discouraged. It seemed heart-

less mockery to hear her talk, and say nothing of what would certainly have cheered her. Yet perhaps a second disappointment might have been more than she could bear. I was about to take my leave, when the servant came to say that a woman was below, and anxious to speak to her. Like poor Abraham, for a moment she was false to her nature, and answered impatiently that she could see nobody.

The maid lingered. "She seems greatly troubled, Miss; she bade me say she was the wife of the man you visited in the prison yesterday. Her name is Oliver."

Of course I was at once on the alert. Miss Molyneux, all unconscious, sighed heavily.

"Well, let the poor woman come up, Mary; I am sure I ought to feel for other people."

I recognised the shawl I had seen in the lane. Mrs Oliver was rather a good-looking young woman: she was wiping her eyes, and greatly agitated. She walked straight up to Miss Molyneux, either not remarking or not heeding my presence. "I am come to fetch you to my husband, Miss; he would speak with you immediately."

"Is he worse? Is he in danger? It is past ten, you see, and the prison must be locked up."

"I know they will let you in at any hour. Come along,—come, and don't lose a moment. If he has time to think about it, he may change his mind. It's for your own sake I am pressing you, not for ours; and if you miss the chance, you will never forgive yourself."

Miss Molyneux started, trembled, and looked at me, and saw something in my face that increased her agitation. She left the room, to come back in a moment or two cloaked, bonneted, and tolerably composed. Mrs Oliver made no

objection to my accompanying them, and Mr Molyneux had come downstairs to escort his daughter.

Mrs Oliver was evidently anxious—anxious, as I fancied, as to the mood in which we might find her worthy husband. And it was just as plain that she was quickly reassured. He was supported on his bed by the pillows, ready and eager to speak. He had the air of a man longing to take a leap he had been craning at, and know himself landed on the other side.

I need not go into his disclosures in detail, since they must have been pretty well anticipated by the reader's sagacity. It appeared that "Oliver" and Lurcher, like Marmion and Lady Heron, had been "friends of old." The invalid had had several *aliases* in his lifetime; but his real name was O'Driscoll, and one and the same individual as the comic actor who had been concerned in Lurcher's original escapades. When I heard that, I began to see my way clearly, and had something more than a glimmering as to the mistaken identity which had imposed so unfortunately on the respectable bank-cashier. Lurcher and O'Driscoll had always kept up relations, although, at the time when Quickett began to make his inquiries, they had quarrelled over a distribution of their plunder, and had cut each other. Lurcher had been hard up, and needed money to indulge in the dissipation that had become habitual to him. Moreover, in the overflow of gall from his malicious heart, he longed to be revenged on his benefactor for the "moral training" he had been subjected to. He had never forgiven the shipwreck on the Danube, or that terrible passage of the Strahlek which had put him in bodily terror. In his easy intimacy with O'Driscoll, he

had been entirely unreserved as to his feelings. The pair had laid their heads together, and, according to O'Driscoll's version of the story, the tempted had become the tempter in turn. He had dwelt upon Mr Cox's eccentricities and his careless habits of business. He had taken an impression of the key that hung at his patron's watch-chain; and as he ransacked his repositories regularly, he knew all about their contents. He had kept himself posted up as to the balance that stood at the credit of the Provident Society. He could lay hands on the cheque-book at any moment. He could supply a specimen of his master's signature, as well as that of the Rev. Mr Prior; while Mr O'Driscoll was unapproachable at counterfeiting handwriting, and, thanks to long experience as an actor of all-work, was inimitable at dressing up to act any part.

At this point the invalid seemed to feel that his share in the rascality needed apology; and when he insinuated that his guilt was light compared to that of Lurcher, so far I was willing to admit his plea. Lurcher had abstracted the suit of his master's clothes in which O'Driscoll dressed himself to draw the cheque.

"When I pulled them off again, with the false whiskers and beard, I knew we were pretty safe so far as detection was concerned. But when I heard that Mr Cox was really brought in guilty, and when Miss Molyneux came to me with oranges and tapioca, little thinking of all the trouble I had brought on her,—looking up in her sorrowful face, I could hold my peace no longer. There, Miss—I've made a clean breast of it at last; and for the rest, I don't much care what becomes of me."

How that might be, I do not

know, though I could fancy that O'Driscoll was a clever actor; nor did I think it meet to ask him at the moment how far his grudge against Lurcher might have dictated his candid confession. Neither did I remind him that that very afternoon his wife had been pressing his accomplice for funds to conduct his defence. The confession was taken down, signed, and duly attested. By way of confirming it, O'Driscoll had suggested that in all probability the abstracted suit of clothes had never been returned to their legitimate owner. Accordingly, he volunteered the address of the pawnbroker who had been in the habit of accommodating his accomplice in his straits; and I may mention that, in the course of the following morning, the garments in question were in the custody of the police.

On the morrow there was hardly an attempt at suppressing the acclamations in court when the judge delivered a most feeling address to an audience of "rank, fashion, and beauty." When he walked forth "without a stain on his character," Abraham was absolutely mobbed by sympathisers who struggled to press his hands; and had he not taken refuge with the governor of

the jail, the crowd might have insisted upon carrying him in triumph. That he and his Cecilia have been living happily ever since, I need hardly say; and he has been restored besides to comparative affluence, by being appointed to a commissionership of charities under Government, where the duties and responsibilities are by no means onerous.

As for that villanous *protégé* of his, the *procès* was a very pretty one. It embraced theft, embezzlement, perjury, and various other items; and when a conviction was recorded against him on most of the counts, it was accompanied by no recommendation to mercy. He was handed over to the good offices of the severest judge who ever dealt rigorous measure to offenders; and probably he cared the less for the vigorous declamation that painted the black atrocity of his conduct, as it was backed up by the longest penal sentence that the law permitted for his aggravated guilt. Of course Mr and Mrs Cox tried their utmost to let some gleams of sunshine into the convict's cell; though I rather fancy that even their saintly benevolence failed to minister much comfort to that mind diseased.

HOMER'S SEA-EPIC RENDERED IN BALLAD-MEASURE.

IN common probably with ourselves, nine readers of Sir Charles Du Cane's experiment in translating the *Odyssey*, out of ten, will rejoice that he has undertaken it, instead of theorising about it. An interest attached, about a score of years back, to Matthew Arnold's Poetry Lectures on translating Homer, not so much because he helped to solve a vexed question, as because he contrived to set the field by the ears, and, whilst provoking some biting retorts and replications, established little more than the happiness of bibliolatry introduced into Homer, translated into whatever form or measure. The hexametrists had at that time sped but poorly and sparingly in an endeavour of which they appear since to have tired. Blank verse had earned no fresh laurels in a translation by Mr Musgrave; and if so much enthusiasm awaited the young Oxford translator, Mr Worsley, in his Spenserian version, that he was encouraged, and eventually, after his early death, supplemented in the fulfilment of his Spenserian Homer, by the learned and laborious critic and professor, Conington, it must have been generally felt that Mr Worsley's success was more due to his innate mastery of his chosen measure, and to an ear that was wonderfully skilled to break up the Homeric lengths of line into others for which they possessed no real adaptability, than to a pervading sense that here was the destined winner of the race—here the chosen weapon of the future English Homerist. In recurring, as we have recently done,

to Mr Worsley's version, it has been borne in upon us with a force stronger by far than twenty years ago, that Spenser's measure must fail to realise Homer's hexameter, however much a true poetic vein like Mr Worsley's might disguise the discrepancy. The English hexameter lies under a still more grievous ban, that no two persons read and scan it alike,—and there is a great deal of hypothesis to be cleared from its path before we can be constrained to classify it as the best exponent of Homer. On the whole, it may be said that the blank verse passes muster with least cavil and carping, because in it a level evenness is the most to be expected; and we have seen very recently such a version, which, even in its stage of half completion, will satisfy the English reader of the *Odyssey*, who can be content with the effect of good average blank verse. For ourselves, we have ever lifted up a voice for the ballad-metre, which Chapman adopted for the *Iliad*, but discarded for the *Odyssey*. It soars above all English measures proper, when applied to a poem of adventure—to “*The Epic of the Sea*.” Dr Maginn regretted that Chapman did not continue the fourteen-syllable verse throughout his Homeric task. It is capable of sufficient comprehension, without any undue share of invention and amplification. It aptly renders the storm at sea; the outwitting of the Cyclops; the councils of the gods, and the errands of their “go-between;” the gardens and glories of Phæacia; the witch-

eries of Circe and Calypso; and the oriental myth of Proteus and the sea-calves. Of this, in part, Dr Maginn had made us aware, long, long ago; though his experiment was multiform, while Sir Charles Du Cane's is boldly uniform. Professing no more than a hope so to render his original that readers may find, while Homer's sense has not been widely departed from, some trace of his spirit also preserved, Sir Charles has striven, we should say, with marked success, to keep ballad-metre from degenerating into *ballad-slang*; and while evincing, in his handling, a proper awe of the ballad-style of "Lord Bateman," has not failed of the simplicity of style, plainness of language, or outrightness of thought, which are admitted essentials of Homer's poetry.

Sir Charles Du Cane has introduced his moiety of the *Odyssey* in a preface of singular modesty, and quoted the authority of Sir Francis Doyle for the opinion that any single English metre must break down in interpreting Homer. The practical admission of such a proposition would be an *olla podrida* of blank verse, ballad-metre, Spenserian stanza, and rhymed heroic (the treacherous yet winsome mistress of Pope); but it surely needs not Mr Gladstone's Homeric authority to pooh-pooh this resort. And, failing it, there should be fair and free course, and if no favour, at least a patient hearing, till the work is done, for a scholar who steps into the field of Homeric translation, not so much a novice as a ripe scholar of old-fashioned and uncrotchety beliefs, content, in common with the less noisy of the scholar world, to retain his ancient faith in one Homer as the author of the "Tale of Troy Divine," and of the "Epic of the Sea." Sir Charles has evidently cultivated and cherished, far beyond

undergraduate days at Oxford, the charms of Homer's muse, and so been able to find, in this work of translation, a beguilement, five years ago, of a voyage round Cape Horn. We shall henceforth niche him beside the late Lord Derby as one rather of our unprofessional than amateur translators.

To a disposition which we have noticed in some contemporary criticism to institute comparisons between Sir Charles Du Cane's fourteen-syllabled ballad version and that excellent and scholarly prose version published by Messrs Butcher & Lang in 1879, we interpose the objection, at starting, that there is no standing-ground. A comparison will not really hold; and the authors of the prose version appear to us to have admitted this in recognising that the question of Homeric translation is purely relative, and can never be final. Their task professes to compass the truth concerning Homer in its historical moiety, neglecting and ignoring its ornamental and poetical half, which the Spenserian, blank verse, and balladic aspirants adventure instead. Of these our prosemen shrewdly plead in their preface that their half-truth involves embellishment, and cannot be simply told. "They must be adding to Homer, talking with Pope about tracing the 'mazy levet o'er the lawn;' or, with Mr Worsley, about the islands that are the 'stars of the blue Ægean;' or, with Dr Hawtrey, about 'the earth's soft arms,'—when Homer says nothing at all about the 'mazy levet,' or the 'stars of the blue Ægean,' or 'the soft arms' of earth."—Pref. x. The *métier* of the prose translator is limited to telling the story without the song, in unadorned, exact, perhaps permissibly archaic and imitative language. And so the two tasks, both arduous and praiseworthy, differ *toto cælo*. Indirect-

ly, however, the labours of Messrs Butcher & Lang afford a criterion with regard to Sir Charles Du Cane's faithful reading and rendering of his author, and a means of testing his abstinence from the proverbial bane of poetic translators—exaggeration and amplification—out of which ordeal, so far as our examination serves us, he will be found to come generally unscathed.

Beginning his original task with the adventures of Ulysses, as told to the king and court of Phæacia, Sir Charles was led *not on, but backwards*, to complete the first half of the Odyssey, by the addition, first, of the Books v.-viii., comprising the start from Ogygia, the wreck of the raft, and the reception of the hero by Alcinous and Arete; next, of the first four books—introducing us to the posture of affairs in Ithaca, and to the voyage of Telemachus in quest of tidings of his sire from his oldest and most valued comrades in arms. As the epic is presented to us, so most conveniently may it be tested in a shape by no means deficient

in sound and accurate scholarship, though this is less discovered in recondite notes on critical questions of language, than in the old-fashioned but still honoured usage of apt parallelism, much of which is more or less original, and confined to occasions which call for it; nor then limited to Greek and Latin parallels, or to parallels at all, when other illustrations serve to elucidate the text.

Every reader of the marine epic knows the details of the Olympian council at the opening of the Odyssey, and how Athene availed to stimulate her cloud-compelling sire to take action towards terminating the hero's dalliance, while she herself stirred up in Ithaca a resistance of the wastefulness of the suitors, and a prospect of relief to Penelope. Here is an early mention in Book i. of the "nymph divine," who, with less mortal spell than her Virgilian counterpart, Dido, was keeping Ulysses from a home and domestic happiness, for which—to speak sooth—his longings seem only conventional.

"Calypso, child to Atlas born, the terrible, the wise,
The sage that of sea's lowest depths kens all the mysteries,
And holdeth up the columns tall that part the earth and skies. }
'Tis she that doth the hapless chief detain upon her isle,
And ever seeks with tender words his sorrow to beguile,
And woo him to forgetfulness of Ithaca; but he
Yearns evermore th' uprising smoke of his own land to see,
And having seen it once again, contented would he die."—i. 60-67.

Contrasted with Mr Worsley here, of amplification, whose winsome picture of "the navel of the deep"—

"Where dwells the child of Atlas, who can sound
All seas, and eke doth hold the pillars tall
Which keep the skies asunder from the ground.
There him, still sorrowing, she doth aye enthrall,
Weaving serene enticements to forestal
The memory of his island-realm; but he
Yearns for the native smoke, *if that were all*,
To see it curling, and to die."—i. p. 6.

may win consideration of its mild offence, but is not to be commended in comparison of General Schom-

berg's unadorned and concise blank verse, in which Calypso

"Ever seeks, with soft and flattering words,
To witch him to forget his Ithaca."

Hermes is despatched to Ogygia. The scene is changed with the transfer of the goddess to Ithaca. Anon, in the guise of Taphian Mentès, we find her confronting the infatuated suitors, busy at play and standing the hazard of the die, according to the rules of a game, which, as we learn in a note of Sir C. Du Cane's, is described by Athenæus in his 'Deipnosophists,' i. 29. It was a game of chance, in which the 108 suitors arranged their pieces opposite each other in equal numbers—54 on each side—with a vacant mid-space, in which they placed a so-called Penelope. At this each suitor aimed with his man. Then, when they had cast lots, he who drew the lot aimed at it. If one hit and thrust Penelope out of her own place, he filled it with his own man, and standing

up again shot at Penelope in her new place. And if he hit her again without touching one of the other men, he won the game, and had the best hopes of the prize. Athenæus adds that Eurymachus was the great adept at this game, and the favourite in the suit for Penelope.

Into the midst of the guests thus disporting themselves in Telemachus's despite, Athene flits, and is in heroic fashion greeted with proffer of good cheer before her errand is asked. While the suitors feast their fill, Telemachus draws his guest's seat and footstool apart, and in the conversation which ensues an opportunity is afforded the indignant heir of the Ithacan halls to vent his bitterness against the overweening cumberers of his substance. In reply to his questioner's query—

"Is it a wedding here ye hold, or tribal drinking bout?"

he furnishes a clue to the posture of affairs, which, if supererogatory to Athene, is yet helpful to the reader's cognisance of the epic's

progress. This is his account in vv. 250 - 272, as given by Sir Charles Du Cane:—

"Stranger, since thou anent these things of me dost question make,
Know that our house, while yet my sire amidst his folk remained,
To riches vast and spotless fame *was like* to have attained.
But now the gods, contriving woes, have willed it otherwise,
For him they utterly have hid from our sore longing eyes.
Beyond all other men on earth his lot hath mournful been,
I should not in his death have felt a sorrow half so keen.
If 'midst his friends to Trojan foe he had been forced to yield,
Or sank to death within their arms on his last foughten field,
Then would the Greeks have reared his tomb, and dying, for his son
A guerdon he of brightest fame for ever would have won.
But him the Harpies from the earth inglorious now have torn;
Unseen, unheard of, hath he died, and left me here forlorn,
To weep and wail: nor for my sire alone do I lament,
For other grievous weight of woe the gods to me have sent.
For all the chieftains who hold rule o'er all the isles around,
In Same, and Dulichium, and Zacynthus forest-crowned;
All too in rugged Ithaca who lordship bear and sway,—
All these my mother woo to wife, and waste my wealth away.
But she nor will refuse outright this hateful marriage-tie,
Nor bring the wooing to an end, and with their suit comply.
My patrimony they the while in revelling consume,
And speedily will me myself to sheer destruction doom."

In the foregoing passage, the first point which strikes us is the translator's appreciation of the

force of μέλλεν ("might have been," "was in the way of being") in v. 252, which evaporates in the dis-

tillation of Worsley; and, if we look back to Pope, finds substitute in sonorous yet unwarranted heroics. But as we proceed, the sense of faithfulness gains on us; and saving for an omission to render *πολύπευσε* in 238 (where it is reserved to the prose-translators to give the finishing-touch of "winding up the clew of war"), there is not a point of the original unrepresented with the fidelity of which it is capable, and the spirit indignant rather than fiery, that the original demands.

"And through the loopholes as a bird mounted on upward flight,"—

bear fruit in access of manhood, no less by the arrogant suitors than his lady mother, who, under his mild remonstrance, speedily hies her back to her upper chamber. He bids her not curtail the minstrel's choice

In the context, the stern-eyed maiden in masquerade suggests to the stripling hero counsels that nerve him with riper purpose; and which, when *ὄρνις ὡς ἀνοπαῖα διέπτατο* (a phrase on which, while commentators and grammarians debate whether *ἀνοπαῖα* is an adverb meaning "upwards," or a noun, "a sea-eagle," or a combined expression *ἀν' ὄπαῖα*, "up through the smoke-vent") is safely represented by our translator's careful rendering—

of song, or suggest a theme perhaps less congenial to others than to herself; and such was his novel assertion of himself, based, we are told, on the conviction "that a god had been his guest," that

"Back to her chamber sped the queen in mute astonishment,
Her son's wise words within her breast revolving as she went."

To the spoilers of his substance he holds sterner though still indecisive language, out of which,

however, loops the intimation of the Ithacan council on the morrow.

" 'My mother's suitors,' thus began Telemachus, 'to-night Feast on, ye proud and godless ones, and in your cheer delight. But cease your clamour, for, methinks, it is no common treat To hear such bard as this, whose voice like to some god's is sweet. But with to-morrow's early dawn the assembly we must seek, That in their hearing I to you without reserve may speak,— Bid ye go hence, seek other feasts, and, each at your own cost, Ope house in turn to all the rest, and play the kindly host. But if it better seem to you in pride of strength to stay, And of one single man to waste the wealth, nor aught repay,— Waste it! But on th' eternal gods then I in prayer will call, That on your heads for these ill deeds Jove's judgment sure may fall: } So unavenged within my house should perish one and all.' }

His words he ended,—all amazed his lips each suitor bit,
And at the boldness of his speech did lost in wonder sit."—i. 388-402.

The words avail to open a prelude to the deliberation of the morrow, after which the suitors lurch home from their revel, and the prudent

prince commits himself to the nursing care of the good Euryclēa for unrobing, in his well-built chamber; where, as the bard tells us,

"Through the night, in woollen fleece enwrapped, he lay awake,
And o'er the voyage pondered deep that Pallas bade him take."

When on the morrow Telemachus meets the assembly, he does so

worthily of his lineage, and extorts wonder and reverence as first the

elders make way for him to take his father's seat. The council sways this way and that, according as it is influenced by the elders or the hot-heads; and it is in the speech of one of the latter—Antinous—that we get the best account of Penelope's device of the lying web, and her claim to rank in subtlety with

“ Heroines of Greece in tale renowned, fair dames of golden hair,
Such as Mycene, richly-zoned, Alcmena, Tyro, were—
(Of these none e'er in sage device could with thy mother vie,
Though in this last device, 'tis true, scant love of right doth lie).”

—ii. 129-132.

Such wily craft the hot-brained compeers, and proclaims a resolve
pleader defies in the name of his to outweary by obstinacy.

“ Thus for herself” [he says] “ a great renown she winneth, but for thee
Vain sorrow, for much substance lost will all thy portion be.
So we our own abodes to seek, or elsewhere wend, refuse
Till she in marriage-tie be bound, with whomsoe'er she choose.”

It is at the close of Telemachus's two eagles is vouchsafed, constituting as it does the most notable
spirited retort to these words of Antinous that Jove's omen of the incident of the Second Book—

“ He spake, and straight far-seeing Jove from the tall mountain height
Two eagles for a sign to him sent forth to take their flight.
Swift as the blowing wind a while these on their errand flew,
And side by side, with straining wings, nigh to th' assembly drew.
But when they reached the market-place, whence from the gathered throng
Rose many a voice, then wheeling round they shook their pinions strong ;
Then on the heads of all glared down, with look that death presaged,
And on each other's cheeks and necks fell strife with talons waged ;
Then o'er the city's house-tops flew, aye speeding to the right,
And all who saw the omen gazed with wonder at the sight.”—ii. 159-168.

Well had it been, we gather from the sequel, had Halitherses, the veteran seer, gained credence for his reading of this augury ; but the words of headstrong Leiocritus avail beyond the sager counsels of Mentor, and anon, by Eurycleia's instrumentality, in the ignorance of his mother, but with the steadfast help and concert of the indefatigable patron-goddess, the young hero climbs on shipboard at nightfall, his vessel fitly manned, stored, and victualled, what time the dazed drinkers of the suitor-crew slumbered and slept. Athene, in Men-

tor's guise, accompanies the cruise ; and the graphic nautical passage which concludes the Second Book, might serve, in Sir Charles Du Cane's exact and yet lifelike sketching, for meet text of the painter who essayed to turn the poem into a picture.

Borne by picked rowers in a gallant ship, with a divine monitor at hand to counsel him against bashfulness and false shame, and to do more than loose his tongue, by suggesting wise words to his speech (for, as the prince himself feels,

“ Shame a young man backward makes to question thus the old ;”

and the hosts whom they encounter recognise equally
on the shore at sacrificial feast,

“ That mortal man doth need the aid of gods from day to day ”),

Telemachus is escorted first to the court of the horse-tamer Nestor, in sandy Pylos, and afterwards to Sparta, in a car and with steeds

charioteered by Nestor's son, Peisistratus, where he meets with like hospitable entreatment from Menelaus and Helen. In Nestor's reception there is perhaps the more heart and simplicity, the more marked halo of heroic manners : in

the Court of Sparta, more grace, and elegance, and splendour, not without an occasional shadow flung over the princely hospitality which needed all the virtues of Helen's drug from Egypt, Polydamna's nepenthe, to dissipate.

"Gifted it was with power to soothe all anger or distress,
And of all ills upon the earth to bring forgetfulness.
Whoso should drink that magic draught when mixed within the bowl,
Throughout that day adown his cheek would let no tear-drop roll—
Not though his mother or his sire upon that day should die,
Or foeman's steel should slay loved son or brother 'fore his eye."—iv. 224-229.

And truly it was meet that the bard should note this difference between the halls of Nestor and Menelaus—the former characterised rather by simple tastes, the latter by travelled culture ; the first

illustrated by the pleasures of a grandsire's memory, the second tempered by an admixture of sweet with bitter in the cup placed ready to the guest's side, where

"Through the loudly echoing halls the flashing brass doth shine,
Whilst amber, iv'ry, silver, gold, their various hues combine !"—iv. 74-75.

From either host the visitor learns shrewd hints for his quest of his lost father ; from both receives a welcome and hospitality, or ever his name is asked. The Fourth

Book, however, is on the whole the richer in incident, as where Helen tells of her secret interview with Ulysses, what time

"He entered lofty Troy's wide streets alone 'midst enemies,
Far other than his own true self, in wretched beggar's guise."

And Menelaus owns how, when he and Ulysses lay concealed in the wooden horse, Helen, mimicking the voice of each Danaan warrior's wife, and calling each ambushed chief's name, thrice did walk round, and feel by hand the hollow lair, and tempt, but for the stern repression of the Ithacan chief, the reticence of irrepressible Anticlus.—iv. 245-290.

Perhaps, however, there is no episode of the visit to Sparta, and conversation of Menelaus, of such curious interest as that monarch's full account of his constraint on the sea-god Proteus, the sire of a pitying goddess Eidothea, to tell him the secret of the persistency of the divine wrath against his much-enduring self. Pharos, the scene of this adventure, is said to be less than a mile from the seaboard of the

Delta of Egypt ; and Sir Charles does not tell us which horn he prefers of the dilemma ; that Homer took a poetic licence with regard to the position of Pharos, or that the sea must have retreated and the land advanced. Perhaps we should agree with Dr Hayman and later commentators, that an obviously gossiping account cannot be expected to square itself with actual topography ; and after all, as Mr Merry's note points out, the parallel passage of Strabo goes some way to justify the Homeric description.

The shifts of the "Old Man of the Sea" awaken so many echoes of other literature, that we are minded to make a somewhat longer quotation from the part of this episode, which consists in Eidothea's directions to Menelaus (iv. 381-390)—

"A sea-god of immortal race, old Proteus, wonneth here,
 For truthful oracles far-famed, the wise Egyptian seer.
 He knows the vast sea's inmost depths, which own Poseidon's sway,
 And him I truly boast my sire, if truth report doth say.
 If him thou couldst, by ambush laid, within thy grasp ensnare,
 He of thy voyage will the course e'en to its end declare,—
 How o'er the wide fish-teeming deep thou mayst at length return,
 And more besides would tell to thee, shouldst thou desire to learn.
 What good or ill within thine halls has happened, he will say,
 Whilst thou thus long hast wand'rer been upon this toilsome way."

To the narrator's deprecation of sea-nymph, replies by directions,
 an unequal contest, the goddess, or thus—

"When the bright sun with noon-day heat high in mid-heav'n shall burn.
 Then from the brine emerging comes before the zephyr's breeze
 He who speaks truth infallible, the ancient of the seas.
 Veiled in dark ripple to the shore he glides beneath the waves,
 And issues forth to take his rest, couched in the hollow caves.
 Around him the web-footed brood of Halosydna fair,
 His sea-calves, throng from out the deep to lie and slumber there,
 And, sleeping, from their nostrils snort the bitter smell of brine.
 Thither will I direct thy steps, when morn begins to shine,
 And set thee in safe hiding-place: do thou select with care
 Three comrades, who of all thy crew the best and bravest are,
 And all the old man's cunning wiles I next to thee will tell.
 First, he will round the sea-calves go, and their full number spell:
 When he has duly counted all, he'll lay him down to sleep
 Amidst them all, as shepherd lies amidst a flock of sheep.
 Him when thou seest addressed to sleep, and well in slumber laid,
 Then summon all the strength and force thou boastest to thine aid,
 And hold him, spite his eagerness and struggles to escape;
 For of all creeping things on earth he will assume the shape,—
 Yea, and of running water too, and of resistless fire.
 But tighten all the more thy grasp, till he thy will inquire
 In the same shape that, when he sought his slumbers first, he wore.
 Then slack your force, and him straightway to liberty restore,
 And ask who of th' immortal gods with anger visits thee,
 And how return may yet be thine o'er the fish-teeming sea."—396-420.

How the plot sped, and the wizard's transformations were abided and outstood, the Homeric reader needs not be told; nor yet what potent traps for wily sea-gods may be found wrapped up in noisome new-flayed sealskins. Among other confidences of the marine seer to the Spartan king is the third variation of the strange Agamemnonian tragedy, for which he bids him not cherish endless weeping, inasmuch as the traitor Ægyptus is destined to meet his doom at the hand of Orestes; while the Ithacan son of Laertes must yet a little longer bide perforce his dalliance in Calypso's isle. We forbear to quote the Virgilian and Ovidian parallelisms wherewith Sir Charles Du

Cane has illustrated this somewhat oriental episode. It is even somewhat supererogatory to draw attention to his enumeration of the shifts of Puck, "through bog, through bush, through brake, through brier," in every guise, and with every sound known to zoology, in the third act of "Midsummer Night's Dream," or to note the parallel transformation in the third book of the 'Faerie Queene,' quoted in the footnotes of p. 70. Yet it would be amiss to let the old man have said his say, and "headlong plunge beneath the foaming brine," without extracting that part of his prophecy which concerns the chief forcer of his hand—the fate reserved, according to Proteus's foreknowledge, for the

younger Atrides—a passage gracefully turned here, and by the pick of poets of all lands, chosen as basis for their beau-ideal of the fields Elysian. Audience for the last words of Proteus!

“But, Menelaus, noble prince, know 'tis not fate's decree
That thou in Argos famed for steeds thine end of life shalt see.
Thee to the blest Elysian plains th' immortals will convey,
Where the far-distant ends of earth own Rhadamanthus' sway.
There lapped in a delicious ease the life of man glides by;
No snow nor winter's storm is there, no rain falls from the sky;
But ever fresh'ning from the wave some new-born zephyr springs,
And, sent by ocean, to mankind its grateful coolness brings:
As Helen's spouse, Jove's son-in-law, this lot, O Prince, is thine.”

—iv. 557-565.

Sir Charles has culled the aptest, yet least literal, of modern parallels, in a fine passage of Swinburne's “Atalanta in Calydon.”

The Fifth Book opens with the account of the Argicide's errand,

at Jove's behest, to Calypso's isle, skimming the seas, say the prose translators, like the cormorant, or, as our translation has it, with as much approximation of accuracy—

“Like to the wild sea-mew,
That through the barren deep's dread gulf doth fishy prey pursue,
And, dipping oft beneath the brine, her pinions gently laves,—
So Hermes rode from crest to crest upon the thronging waves.”—v. 51-54.

The bird designated was obviously a diver of some kind; and the bard seeks but to imply that Hermes swooped down after its fashion, and used the waves for his chariot. Reaching the strand, by the odour sweet of sandal-wood

and cedar-log burning on the nymph's hearth, and by the guidance of her melodious voice, he beheld one of those visions of natural beauty so richly shed over the Odyssey—so inimitable, despite the wealth of effort—by after-poets.

“In full luxuriance round her cave arose a leafy wood,
Where alder, mixed with cypress sweet, and lofty poplar stood,
Beneath whose shelter long-winged birds flock nightly to their rest,—
Falcon and owl, and chattering crow, that haunts the sea's broad breast.
And climbing o'er the hollow cave, a vine its tendrils flung,
In the full bloom of vigorous growth, with purple clusters hung.
Four fountains with their crystal spray nigh to each other gleamed,
And branching off with gentle rill, on separate courses streamed.
Whilst all around the nymph's abode fair grassy meads lay spread,
With tufts of violet soft and sweet, and parsley carpeted.
E'en an immortal, if his way should thitherward be bent,
Might stand and gaze upon the scene in joy and wonderment.”—v. 63-74.

A glance at the parallelism from Spenser, Milton—above all, from Beckford's ‘Vathek’—must show how the blind old bard of “Scio's isle” excelled all comers in filling his picture without crowding the canvas or offending against the rule, “Ne quid nimis;” and a close comparison of the original with the

present version will result, we should confidently expect, in an impression of adequate and graphic realism, to an unprejudiced critic. The nymph's reluctant and grudging submission to Jove's mandate; the glimpse of her mortal paramour, of whom, in a figure of speech adopted by our own poets, Homer saith—

‘ἀλλ’ ἤτοι νύκτας μὲν ἰαυέσκεν καὶ ἀνάγκη
ἐν σπέεσι γλαυροῖσι παρ’ οὐκ ἐθέλων ἐθελούσῃ·

“Albeit compelled her couch to share throughout the weary night;
Unwilling, in her willing arms he lay, nor found delight.”—v. 148, 149.

her own, if we may so speak, human kindness, in answering the cunning one's guile with a transparently honest promise, on a form of oath by Styx, to build the voyagers a raft, which this eventful book sees built, and storm-tossed, and shattered,—are so many indications of the original bard's versatil-

ity of excellence—so many tokens of a grasp of imagination, which *nihil quid tetigit non ornavit*. Very hopeless is the wanderer's plight, when, weary and wave-tossed, yet with the tenacity left in him to regain, if possible, his raft, he excites the sympathy of the sea-goddess Ino—

“As he amidships sat him down, in hope from death to flee,
Whilst here and there the fragile raft was borne upon the sea.”

Yes; sore the strait, though the heroic simile depicts it more vividly than grandly:—

“And as in autumn o'er the plain the thistle-down flies fast,
And close together cling the tufts, before the north wind's blast;
So the mad gales, now blowing here, now there, in cruel play,
From one to other drove the raft o'er the vast watery way.
One while by south 'twas tossed for north to drive; a moment more,
By raging east for west winds' chase in scorn 'twas yielded o'er.”—v. 313-318.

It is worth while for the reader here to compare the ornate version of Worsley, though we should marvel at the taste which would pronounce it more meet for the occasion. The hero divests himself of the robes supplied him for his voyage by Calypso, binds on his breast Ino's talisman, and at length feeling *terra firma* from out the waves scoops himself a leafy bed in thicket shelter, whence he is, after refreshing sleep, to be enticed by the bright, and one might almost say pastoral, vision of Nausicaa. The name of this maiden is the key-note to at least two books of the *Odyssey* which follow next; whilst it is not till Ulysses has told his wondrous tale of adventure with the Læstrigions, the Cyclops, in Circe's Isle, and past the dark Cimmerian tribe, “down among the dead men,” that, through the safe-conduct of Alcinous and Arete, the wanderer, loaded with presents, is, sleeping, set ashore at Ithaca by the Phæacians, and waking knows it not. Howbeit the interval occupies seven books with much and unflagging

variety; and the happy shifts of scene and theme dispel tedium, whilst they avouch, to our thinking, the master-mind of one individual Homer; for how should half-a-dozen or a dozen pieces have formed a robe so flawless and unseamed? Passing over the opening of the Sixth Book, Minerva's vision to Nausicaa, in guise of the daughter of Dymas, that maiden's coaxing from her father a wain and mules for an errand of mixed work and play at the sea-shore laundry, her clever charioteering, and afterward provision for her maidens' food and exercise, and the chance misadventure of the stray ball's flop into the river-depths, so as to awake Ulysses,—we will put ourselves in the place of the hero, heartened by his patron goddess to encounter, at disadvantage though he was, the royally courageous daughter of Alcinous, who flinched not as her maidens did; and extract a passage of Sir Charles Du Cane's presentment of Homer's ideal, of soft words and honeyed tongue:—

"O queen, be thou of heaven or earth, I supplicate thy grace ;
 If of the gods thou art who hold wide heaven for dwelling-place,
 I deem that thou in beauteous form, and mien, and stature tall,
 Unto Jove's daughter, Artemis, art likest of them all.
 But if thou art of human kind, and dwell'st 'mid mortals here,
 Thrice blest thy father do I hold, thy lady mother dear ;—
 Thrice blest thy brethren too, whose hearts must swell with joy when thee,
 So fair a flower of maidenhood, entering the dance they see.
 But blest o'er all I reckon him who shall thy spouse become,—
 Shall win thee for his bride by gifts, and lead thee to his home :
 For never yet so fair have I seen one of mortal mould,
 Nor youth, nor maiden, and with awe thy beauty I behold.
 But once a thing as fair to see in Delos met mine eyes,—
 A palm's young sapling that I saw nigh Phœbus' altar rise ;
 For there too, by a goodly host attended, did I go
 Upon that voyage which to me was source of bitter woe.
 On that too long I gazed enwrapt in wonder at the sight,
 Since never from the earth grew shaft so tall and so upright.
 So, lady, upon thee I gaze in wonderment, and fear
 To clasp thy knees ; yet heavy is the load of grief I bear.
 It was but yestere'en that, tossed by wave and stormy blast
 For twenty days incessantly, the sea I 'scaped at last.
 Me borne from far Ogygia's isle some god on this your shore
 Has cast, of trouble on your land perchance to suffer more.
 For even here I fear to find from trouble naught of ease ;—
 Fresh ill the god will work me yet, or ere my wand'rings cease.
 After long woe, thee first, O queen, thy pity have I sought,—
 For of the men who hold this land and city know I naught.
 Show me thy city, give some rag around my limbs to cast,
 If thou of thy choice linen's store some coarser *covering* hast,
 And thee with all thy soul's desire may the immortals bless,—
 Home, husband, union of hearts, man's highest happiness ;
 For gift more perfect from the god than this there cannot come,
 When wife and husband, heart in heart united, keep their home,—
 Sight of great joy to loving friend, of pain to envious foe ;
 Albeit the fulness of their bliss none but themselves may know."

—vi. 152-187.

There is no room for ambiguity in the natural sentiment expressed in the line last quoted, which substantially agrees with Worsley's rendering, "But most themselves know their own bliss ;" and that of the prose translators, "But their own hearts know it best." As Mr Merry notes in his larger Oxford edition, the thought is analogous to that in the book of Proverbs xiv. 10: "The heart knoweth his own bitterness ; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." As Dr Hayman had already divined in his commentary, κλέειν seems nowhere in Homer to bear the sense of "to hear one's self spoken of." The palm-branch anigh Phœbus's altar at Delos is spoken of in the Greek text as if still a sapling when Ulysses visited it ; and the allusions to it by Greek and Latin

authors are explicable, by understanding that a sacred palm-shoot was a perpetual and perennial institution at Delos, which appears to have been the favourite oracle of Phœbus for seafarers in Agamemnon's day, as Pytho was for landmen. The *ῥάκος* or rag which the suppliant, pitching his expectations very low, entreats in v. 180, is explained in the context as a coarse linen wrapper ; and we see that the modesty of his request is appreciated and reciprocated by Nausicaa's generous direction of him to her sire as the source and fountain of kindly welcome and assistance. Apropos of the crowning sentiment of Ulysses' speech, so fitly and aptly rendered throughout by our translator, it would be an omission not to cite his apt parallel passage from Shakespeare's "Henry VI.," Pt. II., Act i. sc. 1 :—

"For thou hast given me in this beauteous face
A world of earthly blessings to my soul,
If sympathy of love unite our thoughts."

The noble white-armed princess
hears his appeal with courage,
hereditary and heroic, and stint-
ing nought of hospitality to his
needs on her own behalf, recalls

her scared train to their obvious
duty towards the hapless stranger,
on the teaching of the heroic rule,
that—

"'Neath mighty Jove's protection stand suppliants and strangers all,
And grateful still is friendly help, although the gift be small."

To help her favourite, too, while
at Nausicaa's bidding her maids be-
stir themselves to their neglected

offices of mercy, the Jove-born
Pallas, never unmindful of his need
of her timely help—

"Grander made the hero's form to view,
And thick adown his head showered locks of hyacinthine hue.
As when o'er silver molten gold some cunning smith doth pour,
By Pallas and the fire-god taught all kind of craftsman's lore,
And thus he clothes with beauty's charm each work of his design,
So o'er his shoulders and his face she shed her light divine."—vi. 230-235.

Thus made by his tutelary god-
dess meeter to persuade and charm,
we note the growth of the wanderer
into a hero of light in the princess's
estimation. She can even breathe
to her handmaids, out of earshot of
Ulysses, and out of the reach of her
sire—before whom, as we learnt in
v. 68, "her hope of coming mari-
riage she with virgin shame had
tried to veil"—the fond fluttering
aspirations which, could we deem
the heroic bard to have ever in-
dulged in sentiment, he might fairly
be credited with in the instance of
Nausicaa. Indeed her maidenly
squeamishness supports the sus-
picion that she has a favour unto
him; for why else should she in-
struct him to run alongside the

car as it passes the haven and mari-
time quarter, the market-place, and
temple? To escape gossiping or
slandrous tongues, he is to avoid
hazarding her fair fame by admix-
ture with a wanderer in public;
and to hie unnoticed to Athene's
poplar grove, with the gardens,
meads, and vineyards nigh her
sire's domain, "which within hail
of our fair town by shout of man
do lie." There he is to rest awhile,
to allow the maiden bevy time for
seemly return and housing; and
after that to ask his way straight
to the palace of Alcinous, and
having reached it, pass quickly
through the outer halls, until she
reaches Arete, the queen-mother's
presence:—

"Her seated by the hearth thou'lt find, in the fire's glowing light,
With busy distaff turning threads, sea-purpled,—wondrous sight.
Fast by a pillar tall she sits, her maidens orderly
Behind their royal mistress ranged, my father seated nigh.
There, like immortal god enthroned, he quaffs the precious wine, —
But pass him by, and at her feet in rev'rence due incline,
And clasp her knees, that thou mayst see of sweet return the day,
And thine own loved and long-lost home, how far soe'er away.
If thou mine honoured mother's heart to pity canst win o'er,
Thenceforth may certain hope be thine to gain thy native shore,
And safely reach thy well-built house, thy friends behold once more."

Truly the princess had read and studied the grand secret of court-life in the heroic, as in after ages. Let but the monarch sit and drink his wine like an immortal enthroned beside the hearth-fire, and close beside his august spouse's chair against a pillar; and the suppliant may make his obtaining the king's interest secondary to that of the lady-

mother, occupied in more retentive and unselfish concerns. Neither king nor queen apparently despises the support of the pillar against which his throne is propped and her chair leans; and yet you look in Pope for any mention of this pillar in vain. The sonorous heroist had exhausted himself in the grand-sounding couplet—

“High in the midst among the Scherian powers
My royal father shares the genial hours.”

A couplet which Gilbert Wakefield squares with tolerable accuracy, by making Alcinous quaff his nectar with Arete apart, hobbing and nobbing with her in supreme indifference to the sentiments of the high estates of Scheria. The princess having said her say, ascends her chariot, accomplishes her homeward way; whilst her suppliant, mindful of her hests, is helped to fulfil them to the letter by the seemingly chance encounter of a maiden bearing a pitcher of water, but who (seeing that she was in truth, as the reader would divine, Pallas Athene in a new disguise) proves to Ulysses the best and most valuable of cicerones, until she has landed him in the Phæacian palace, indoctrinated him in the pedi-

gree of the Phæacian royal family, and posted him up in the grand secret why she shines with a light not merely reflected from the king, as chief courtier virtually both in court and council.

The aspect of the halls of Alcinous as they shone resplendently to the sight of Ulysses, when he paused ere crossing the brazen threshold, has been a choice commonplace to each competing translator. Cunning artisans of the school of Hephæstus had there wrought art-marvels fortunate in the representation of a bard who could liken them so vividly. It might, we think, be doubted, whether, *apropos* of the guardian dogs of silver and gold on either side the double-doors (vii. 91-94)—

χρύσειοι δ' ἐκάτερθε καὶ ἀργύρεοι κύνες ἦσαν,
οὓς Ἥφαιστος ἔτευξεν ἰδυῖνσι πραπίδεσσιν,
δῶμα φυλασσέμεναι μεγαλήτορος Ἀλκινόοιο,
ἀθανάτους ὄντας καὶ ἀγήρωσ ἥματα πάντα—

Sir Charles has not somewhat erred the Greek. When we have read in dilution of the terseness of that,

“Upon either hand
Dogs twain of silver and of gold did watchful guardians stand.
These erst with cunning hand and brain the mighty fire-god wrought,
And for eternal sentinels to the king's palace brought,—

it seems like Englishing a super-iphrastric couplet—
erogatory gloss to peruse the per-

“Unconquered by the stroke of death, there will they ever stay,
Nor bow their heads before the approach of age and slow decay.”

It must be owned that Mr Worsley, perhaps through the exigencies of his stanza, has made as much of—

“ And dogs on each side of the doors there stand,
Silver and gold, the which in ancient day
Hephæstus wrought with cunning brain and hand,
And set for sentinels to hold the way :
Death cannot tame them nor the years decay.”

Fullest credit, however, must be awarded to our translator in ballad-metre for steering clear of hidden rocks, in the *moot crux* of the commentators—

καιροσέων δ' ὀθονέων ἀπολείβεται ὕγρον ἔλαιον.—vii. 107.

which, adopting and endorsing Merry's view that Homer refers here, and in two parallel passages, to the actual use of oil, and not merely an oily or glossy appearance, he translates—

“ And from the close-spun linen weft drops off the liquid oil.”

But there is a companion passage about the “Hortus”—so famous in the heroic times, that *Ferre poma ad Alcinoûm* passed into an adage with after-ages for any work of supererogation—which it were a sin to leave unquoted in our survey :

“ Without the courtyard, nigh the door, extends a garden-ground,
Four acres broad, on either side with fence-work girt around,
And orchard-trees of lofty height grow in luxuriance there,
Laden with apple, golden fruit, pomegranate, or with pear, }
Or in rich plenty luscious fig or blooming olive bear. }
Of these the fruitage through the year nor perisheth nor fails,—
Winter or summer, evermore blow zephyr's gentle gales,
And with their breath to early life force on the budding shoot,
Or on the pendent branches fan to mellowness the fruit.
Apple on apple ripens fast, pear follows upon pear,
Fig upon fig, and grape on grape the vine doth daily bear.”

—vii. 110-120.

Mr Worsley's rendering of this passage is one of the most admired stanzas of his version ; but it may be doubted whether the lines which we have just quoted rank a whit beneath them in accuracy of rendering, vivid effect, or poetic presentment. Our quotation is not continued over the description of the vineyard, and the fountains and garden-beds ; but it is fair to note that not even the nicety of distinction which the careful study of Mr Merry has traced to Homer here, has been missed or slurred by our translator, making as he

does the word *παροιθε* (125) the key-note to a division into background, centre, and foreground.

One other passage must be glanced at in this same book, where Alcinoûs, bidding his stranger suppliant welcome in true heroic strain, defers his inquiry into his errand till he has found hospitable entreatment. He may, the monarch argues, be a god in disguise, “an angel unawares.” But if this is so, it is hardly of a piece with the usual treatment of the Phæacians by Zeus and the Olympians.

“ But if he prove to be some god descended from the skies,
Then some strange dealings with our race it seems the gods devise,—
For ever undisguised to us the gods their forms displayed,
When of the mighty hecatombs due sacrifice we made.
Of it has a god amidst us all our banquet sat and shared,
Nor e'en the lonely wand'rer shunned, who on the roadway fared,—
For with the gods that rule on high, affinity we boast,
As do the Cyclops, or the fierce and lawless giant host.”

—vii. 198-205.

Alcinous seems to imply, with a little of the insular and characteristic brag and boastfulness which has been imputed to him, a degree of perplexity at any possible suspension of equal relations between the gods above and his subjects who are god-descended. At any rate, he must assert for the Phæacians, alike in public at sacrifices, as on the highroad in chance *rencontre*, those privileges of free intercourse

which *quasi* celestials, like the Hyperboreans, Ethiopians, and, as Homer supposes here, the giants and Cyclopes, enjoy with the gods their neighbours. There is covert humour, as noted in the volume of Mr Lucas Collins on the *Odyssey*, Ancient Classics series (pp. 56, 57), in Ulysses' disclaimer of divinity, and his profession, at the time present, of a profounder reverence for the claims of his appetite.

"Than rav'ning belly there is no more shameless mendicant,
Which ever biddeth man perforce be mindful of his want."

—vii. 215, 216.

The hero has lived long enough, and roughly enough, not to be squeamish as to an imputation of an undue regard to the calls of hunger: he is not too celestial to ignore his daily bread.

Space would never suffice to furnish even a brief selection of the chief incidents of the remaining books of the first moiety of the *Odyssey*, so various and so diverse as to afford an impression of endless versatility. One of the most noteworthy and instructive in the Eighth Book is the rebuke and disproof given in the course of the games and matches inaugurated at the Phæacian court by Ulysses, to the boaster and prize-wrestler Euryalus, who lacked the modesty and

consideration we are wont to associate with an undoubted athlete. Ulysses had impressed a good number of the wrestlers, leapers, and quoit-throwers with his fine proportions, sinewy limbs, and latent strength; and the king's son, Laodamas, suggested that if he were not spirit-broken and strength-sapped through his struggles with the resistless sea, perchance he might give them a taste of his prowess in manly exercises. But the hero excuses himself on the score of an alien mood, and a heart and spirit too sorrowful for such feats; whereat one of the champions, Euryalus, boastfully twits him with being no athlete, but

"Liker one in well-oared ship who sails from land to land,—
Some captain of a trading bark, by crew of hucksters manned,
Who minds his freight, and guards his wares and gains that greed hath won;
But athlete, if mine eye judge right, O stranger, thou art none."

—viii. 158-161.

The speaker had spoken without his host, and the hero chanced on a butt as easy to rebuke by words as to silence by superior prowess. Ulysses points the moral of mental and bodily prowess, coupled with modesty and discretion, as contrasted with athletic gifts unaccompanied by these. His

speech, as Sir Charles reminds us in a footnote to his appropriate translation, may have suggested or supplied hints to Claudian, "*De Laud. Stilichonis*," i. 25; and the retort in Livy, xxii. 51, "*Vincere scis, Hannibal, victoria uti nescis*." But he is not content to rest quiet with biting speech alone.

"He spake; nor waited to unrobe, but to his feet did bound,
And seized a quoit of heavier weight than those which lay around.

A massive stone forsooth it was, and far in size surpassed
 Such as Phæacia's sons were wont in rivalry to cast.
 This with his stalwart arm's full force the hero whirled and threw,
 And low the ship-famed people crouched, as booming on it flew.
 Lightly it sped beyond the rest, and Pallas marked its fall,
 Where in the guise of man she stood, and thus to him did call :
 'Nay, e'en the blind, O guest, thy quoit by touch could recognise :
 Not lost amidst the common ruck, but far ahead it lies.
 This time, at least, thou well mayst back with confidence thy throw,
 For no Phæacian hand will reach, *much more* beyond it go.'"

—viii. 185-196.

Sir Charles Du Cane reads in the last line *much less*; should it not be read, as we print it, *much more*?

To further proof of surpassing prowess, Alcinous rules that his guest shall not be subjected—nay, he even deprecates the pretensions of his Phæacian subjects to superior excellence in other contests than those connected with swiftness of foot or seaman's craft; almost in the same breath with which averment, and in exact keeping with the nautical element which Mr Lucas Collins has noted in the names of the champions and courtiers among the "Scherian powers," he changes the subject of his guest's entertainment by summoning the dancers (and by the way, naval authorities assure us there are no more

earnest and decorous dancers on occasion than Jack-tars on ship-board). These were called *βητάρμοι*, it should seem, because they took steps after measured time to tread a measure with many twinkling feet, which Ulysses watched, wrapt in wonder. In truth, the court appears to dissolve itself at once into dancing and music; for Demodocus and his harp are sent for simultaneously with the dancing folk, reminding commentators and general readers alike of Horace's admirable epistle to Lollius anent Homer's practical philosophy in the Iliad and the Odyssey. A half-forgotten but still meritorious versifier of that epistle, the Rev. Francis Howes, some time a minor canon of Norwich, thus translated the lines in question:—

"Mark the spruce fribbles of Alcinous' court,
 Soft sons of sloth dissolved in amorous sport,
 Who snored till midnoon, and to melting airs
 Lulled in delicious trance life's anxious cares.
 How many still with these poor idlers lie,
 Born but to eat and drink and sleep and die."

Melting airs indeed! The blind Demodocus could scarce have chosen a theme more adapted *ad strepitum citharæ cessatum ducere curam* than the obviously favourite lay of the "Net of Hephæstus," the genuineness of which suffers no detriment from the low morality of the tale. The actors in it are gods and goddesses, to whom here, as in Iliad xiv. 312-353, and Iliad xxiv. 130, and not to men and heroes, are reserved episodes or suggestions of indelicacy. The

lay, too, is consistent with the time and place—is very Homeric in its language—and is conceived in a strain calculated to divert both the wanderer and guest, and those of the court who had given him passing umbrage—by the detail of domestic infidelities in a higher sphere.

We forbear, however, to quote Sir Charles Du Cane's lively but unexceptionable version of the witticisms of Phœbus and Hermes, amidst the chorus of Olympian

jeers at the success of Vulcan's network ; as also to add other passages marked for quotation out of the subsequent books, representing Ulysses' narrative at the Phæacian court. The Ninth Book, however, might furnish more than one pretty picture of the Cyclops harbour, and of the rich deep subsoil of vineyards and ploughland hard by ; or the story of which its diverse imitations illustrate the infinite zest, the hazardous but ultra-comic adventures of Noman. Perhaps, however, the narrative from the Eleventh Book, of what the truly versatile hero experienced and learned in his visit to the shades, might yield no less variety of interest and food for quotation, did time suffice for its indulgence. The Necyomanteia, however, of the Odyssey deserves an essay to itself, as a clue or a sequel to the delineation of the ethical characters of Homer. But our review has reached its limit ; and we can but hope that, so far as it has gone, its survey has sufficiently scrutinised Sir Charles Du Cane's

handling of the smooth and level, as well as adventurous and exciting, passages of the first half of the Odyssey, to kindle in readers to come a distinct prepossession in favour of the ballad-metre as a worthy exponent of Homer's manner, metre, and matter ; and of Sir Charles himself as an eminent instance of the fascination which the Homeric sea-epic possesses for traveller, voyager, adventurer, findingsatisfaction in the person of a competent *littérateur*. He has contributed, we believe, to lay the already less unquiet ghost of the hexameter. His instalment of a ballad-metre version of the Odyssey will have earned favour enough to insure its completion ; and future readers will no longer be constrained to be thrown on the dilemma of vivid prose, or tediously tentative exotic verse, when to the poetic but necessarily periphrastic Spenserian, and the unadorned and sober-paced blank verse, is added a complete, faithful, unfettered, and rapid-moving exponent in a native ballad-metre.

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES.

NO. II.—LORD HERBERT OF CHERBURY.

THE philosopher, diplomatist, and knight-errant whose name stands at the head of this page is one of the most curious, as well as one of the most splendid, figures which cross our path in those days of gorgeous and animated national life which precede the great turning-point of English history. He lived through the greater part of the struggle between Charles I. and the Parliament, but neither his life nor his genius was of that sombre and momentous period. He belongs to the undivided England, and the picturesque and overflowing existence of the previous age, when chivalry was still a living principle, and the old and the new had not yet come to any general battle hand to hand; before theology had begun to flourish as a national pursuit, but while learning was in fashion — while princesses translated Latin and read Greek for their amusement, and a manuscript treatise on philosophy was a possible portion of the baggage of a brilliant young knight. He was born under Elizabeth, and received a gracious reception from that great sovereign, who paused to notice his gallant training and youthful good-looks in the gloomy conclusion of her life; and served under James, to whom he was welcome at once for these external qualities (always a ready passport to the favour of the beauty-loving Stewarts), and for his intellectual gifts. He is said to be the first Englishman who left a record of his own life for the instruction of his descendants; and as such, has an especially interesting place among the autobiographers of the world. His history, however,

is not detailed and complete like the last which we submitted to the reader, but concerns only the earlier portion of his existence, though it was written in his declining age. His youthful training and studies, and the exploits of his early manhood, are all that he has set down for us; and, indeed, it was not for us distant and obscure spectators in an age so different, but for his own posterity, — the knightly descendants who should pursue a like course after him, inherit his estates, rule his dependants, and, like him, go out gloriously upon the world, "riding the Great Horse," and surrounded by the glitter of chivalrous accoutrements, banners flying and trumpets sounding, — that my Lord of Cherbury put his adventures on record. The tone of fatherly instruction with which he sets his example before his descendants, and the fine consciousness that only knights, and gentlemen born to high employments and the great world, are likely to be his audience, gives a stately grace to his narrative. He is too complete a knight to be discourteous even to the humblest, but they are not within his sphere of vision. The world to which he addresses himself is clothed in velvet and gold, and has possession by nature of all the privileges of existence. His record turns instinctively into a code of instruction for those who shall have the governance of great estates and the weight of family honours, not to speak of ambassadorships and the favour of princes, after him. There are few things more captivating to the imagination than this natural atmosphere of rank and social eleva-

tion. When men begin to ask themselves the reason of those differences which classify humanity, a bitterness and sense of wrong creep in to poison even the pleasures of the imagination; but to the ingenious and unpolitical reader there is always a charm in that fine air of conscious greatness, in the picturesque calm and involuntary superiority of those who, having given themselves only the trouble to be born in order to be great, wear their greatness, for that very reason, with a far more attractive simplicity and grace than those who have acquired it by real merit. This is one of the paradoxes which abound on the very surface of life; but there is some reason in our preference, as a matter of art, for the superiority which is arbitrary and not the result of any struggle. Rank saves at least as many heart-burnings as it creates.

Edward Herbert was born in Wales, of a great and much extended family, the different lines of which we shall not attempt to unravel. The first of his ancestors to whom he introduces us at any length is Sir Richard Herbert, brother to the Earl of Pembroke, of whose chivalrous behaviour towards a leader of the rebellious Welshmen whom he besieged in Harlech Castle we are told a pretty story. The Welsh captain had "been a soldier in the wars in France, whereupon he said that he had kept a castle in France so long that he made the old women in Wales speak of him, and that he would keep the castle [of Harlech] so long that he would make the old women in France speak of him." Harlech, high upon its cliff, standing fast, one of the sentinel band along that fine coast by which the proud Edwards and Henrys dominated Wales, was worthy such a boast and such a besieger. When

the garrison could hold out no longer, this brave braggart yielded, on condition that Herbert would do what he could to save his life.

"Sir Richard brought him to King Edward the Fourth, desiring his Highness to give him a pardon, since he yielded up a place of importance which he might have kept longer, upon this hope; but the King replying to Sir Richard Herbert that he had no power by his commission to pardon any, and therefore might, after the representation hereof to his Majesty, safe deliver him up to justice, Sir Richard Herbert answered he had not yet done the best he could for him, and therefore most humbly desired his Highness to do one of two things, either to put him again in the castle where he was, and command some other to take him out, or if his Highness would not do so, to take his life for the said captain's, that being the last proof he could give that he used his utmost endeavour to save the said captain's life. The King finding himself urged thus far, gave Sir Richard Herbert the life of the said captain, but withall he bestowed no other reward for his service."

This would be a fine subject for a romantic poem, and the scene would afford a noble background for all the stirring circumstances of siege and parley: the sea rolling softly over the broad sands with their border of marsh, far down below that mount of vision: the wild, half-savage men-at-arms, looking out frantic from the battlements upon their burning huts and scattered families; while to the westward the calm mountains—great Snowdon and his brethren—stood out against the glow of the sunset, and the sacred isle of Bardsey dipped low into the waves all lit with crimson and with gold. The Herberts were settled early on the disturbed Welsh frontiers, something as the early settlers of the Pale were in Ireland, but with more success in amalgamation. Lord Herbert, however, was born in

Shropshire, at a house belonging to the family of his mother, the eldest of a large family of sons and daughters, one of whom was the gentle poet and Churchman, George Herbert, whose saintly memory cannot be mentioned but with reverence. Their father was a squire of merely local distinction, "black-haired and bearded, of a manly and somewhat stern look, but withall very handsome and well compact in his limbs, and of a great courage;" their mother, a woman of the noblest character, celebrated in Donne's quaint and sweet verses, which bear so much affinity to those of her son. There were ten children, who all came to honour more or less. Edward, the eldest, begins betimes his record of personal experiences.

"My infancy was very sickly, my head continually purging itself by the ears, whereupon also it was so long before I began to speak that many thought I shou'd be ever dumb. The very furthest thing I remember is, that when I understood what was say'd by others I did yet forbear to speak, lest I shou'd utter something that were imperfect or impertinent. When I came to talk, one of the furthest inquiries I made was how I came into this world? I told my nurse, keeper, and others, I found myself here indeed, but from what cause or beginning, or by what means, I could not imagine; but for this as I was laughed at by nurse and some other women that were then present, so I was wondered at by others, who said they never heard a child but myself ask that question; upon which, when I came to riper years, I made this observation, which afterwards a little comforted me, that as I found myself in possession of this life without knowing anything of the pangs and throes my mother suffered, when yet doubtless they did no less press and afflict me than her, so I hope my soul shall pass to a better life than this without being sensible of the anguish and pains my body shall feel in death. For as

I believe then I shall be transmitted to a more happy estate by God's great grace, I am confident I shall no more know how I came out of this world than how I came into it."

This pious persuasion, which contrasts touchingly the pensive yet calm reflections of the old man with the first inquisitive impulses of the child, will surprise many to whom Lord Herbert's name is associated with the cold and intellectual Deism of an age of little faith. But by no possibility could the noble and gallant philosopher be considered a man of little faith. Whatever might be the tone of his formal philosophies, he lived in an age of miracles when wonder and mystery were still in the air, and the veriest unbeliever never dreamed of denying that magnificent and strange domain of the unseen that pressed upon him on every side. He was sceptical as to definite revelation written and formulated, but to his consciousness every man had a special revelation, a communication from heaven which awoke in him the heavenly portion of his spirit, and on the certainty of a great and good God founded all the teachings of virtue. His faith in this individual contact of God and nature with the dimly-gifted and heavenly-born soul was so great, that he has himself palpable wonders and miracles to record. He goes on in a fine passage to compare the period before birth (on which he comments, and which he describes with a solemn frankness, which has gone out of fashion) in which organs are formed for use in a different stage of being, with this mortal life in which are nurtured and developed faculties which on earth can have no adequate and perfect use.

"I believe since my coming into this world my soul hath formed or produced certain faculties which are

almost as useless for this life as the above-named senses were for the mother's womb; and these faculties are Hope, Faith, Love, and Joy, since they never rest or fix upon any transitory or perishing object in this world, as extending themselves to something further than can be here given, and indeed acquiesce only in the perfect, eternal, and infinite: I confess they are of some use here, yet I appeal to everybody, whether any worldly felicity did so satisfy their hope here, that they did not wish or hope for something more excellent; or whether they had ever that faith in their own wisdom, or in the help of man, that they were not constrained to have recourse to some diviner and superior power than they could find on earth, to relieve them in their danger and necessity; whether ever they could place their love on any earthly beauty, that it did not fade and wither, if not frustrate and deceive them; or whether ever their joy was so consummate in anything they delighted in, that they did not want much more than it, or indeed this world can afford, to make them happy. The proper object of these faculties, therefore, though framed, or at least appearing, in this world, is God only, upon whom Faith, Hope, and Love were never placed in vain, or remain long unrequited."

With such sentiments as these most readers will give permission to the author to philosophise as he pleases, without demanding too strict an account of the details of his creed. But this is for the moment far in advance of the autobiography, which retires gently from those pensive heights, to fall back upon the recollections of his thoughtful and curious childhood. It is not surprising that the boy who, as soon as he could speak, demanded to know what this world was and how he came thither, should be at Oxford at twelve, within the walls of King Alfred's College, "disputing in Logic," and doing "in Greek oftener than in Latin" the exercises required of him. Even before this, however, there are par-

ticulars worthy of notice. He was very backward in acquiring Welsh—a tongue that evidently baffled his best endeavours; but derived from his early study of that troublesome language certain recollections of his tutor, whom he "remembers with honour," as having triumphed over his temper. "I never saw him angry during the time of my stay there, and have heard so much of him for many years before. When occasion of offence was given him, I have seen him redden in the face, and after remain for a while silent; but when he spoke, his words were so calm and gentle that I found he had digested his choler." "I never could attain this perfection," adds the biographer, sadly. He was always "subject to choler and passion,"—a family weakness which even George, his saintly brother, was not free of, but which Lord Herbert immediately offers a lively plea for, describing himself as "inclined to speak my mind freely, and indeed rather to imitate those who, having fire within doors, choose rather to give it vent than suffer it to burn the house." The studies of the boyish student, however, who was so much more skilful in Greek than in Welsh, were considerably interrupted. For one thing, his father died, which withdrew him for a short time from college: and this event was followed soon after by a very extraordinary incident. Another gentleman of the race, a certain Sir Willim Herbert of St Gillians, brother of the Earl of Pembroke, had one sole daughter, to whom he left his possessions, on condition that she should marry a Herbert. If this condition was not complied with, the property was to go to more distant relations of the name; but "there was none of the Herberts who either in age or fortune was fit to match her," and the poor heiress,

aged then twenty-one, saw before her the probability of losing all her fair estates, and falling into the position of a poorly-endowed gentlewoman. In these circumstances, Edward Herbert at University, with his precocious Greek, just fifteen, but handsome and likely, was suggested as the necessary husband. He says nothing of any feeling on the matter, or of the lady's personal qualifications, but the result was, that the marriage took place "upon the eight-and-twentieth of February 1598, in the house of Eyton," where he had been born. Some time later this strange pair, accompanied by the mother of Herbert, went to Oxford, where he finished his studies. Imagination is puzzled to depict to itself such a family. The wife of twenty-one in all the importance of a great heiress—what a thing it must have been for her to descend from the heights of her womanhood to the fifteen-year-old boy, prodigy though he was!—but on this point the husband says nothing. Later, we find a full account of a scene between them which proves the Lady Mary to have been no cipher, at least in her own house; but necessity made strange alliances in these violent times. It would be curious to know where they had their home in Oxford: the beautiful and gracious mother scarcely past her bloom, the young wife with a touch of shame and humiliation in any affection she can have borne her boy-bridegroom, and he, in all the phlegm of fifteen, bearing his honours calmly—a father while still little more than a child. He gives us to understand that this premature marriage kept him out of mischief while at the university, so that probably he was himself pleased with his union. And notwithstanding the preoccupations of a married man, he managed to learn

French, Italian, and Spanish, besides his classical attainments, and "to sing any part at first sight in Musick, and to play on the lute." The languages he acquired that he might make himself a citizen of the world: the music, that he might entertain himself at home, and "that I might not need the company of young men in whom I observed, in those times, much ill example and debauchery." The early marriage had evidently promoted a somewhat pedantic virtue, which is not an unusual accompaniment of premature privileges. Unfortunately, he did not always keep up to this desirable level.

Here Herbert pauses to give "to my posterity" certain counsels upon education, both mental and physical. In the first place, he is strongly of opinion that hereditary diseases of all sorts can be extirpated from the constitution by careful effort. The remedies he recommends for some of these constitutional disorders are curiously simple. "Posset drinks of herbs" will take away a tendency to stone, and "the bathing of children's legs and feet in the water wherein Smyths quench their iron" is sovrain for a gouty constitution. There are also such things as *Olium Castorij*, which it is good to use, "but not without advice. They also that are subject to the Spleen from their ancestors, ought to use those herbs that are spleneticks, and those that are troubled with the Falling Sickness with *Cephaniques*." While on this subject, Lord Herbert thinks it right to add that a knowledge of medicine is a thing very useful in the education of a gentleman, "especially the diagnostic part, whereby he may take timely notice of a disease, and by that means timely prevent it, as also the prognostic part, whereby he may judge of the symptoms either increasing or de-

creasing in the disease, as also concerning the crisis and indication thereof."

"This art," he adds, "will get a gentleman not only much knowledge but much credit, since seeing any sick body, he will be able to tell in all human probability whether he shall recover; or if he shall die of the disease, to tell what signs shall go before, and what the conclusion shall be. It will become him also to know not only the ingredients but doses of certain Medicines. . . . Besides, I would have a gentleman know how to make these Medicines himself, and afterwards prepare them with his own hands, it being the manner of Apothecaries so frequently to put in the Succedanea that no man is sure to find these Medicines made with the true drugs which ought to enter into the composition when it is exotique and rare; or when they are extant in the shop, no man can be assured that the said drugs are not rotten, or that they have not lost their natural force and virtue. I have studied this art very much also, and have in case of extremity ministered Physick with that success which is strange, whereof I shall give two or three examples."

These examples are not at all unlike the cases appended to advertisements of patent medicines, quackery being alike in all ages, and having its chances and triumphs like every other art. We suspect there are few weaknesses more dear to the imagination, the wisest of us being not much removed from the proverbial old woman in our love of an unlicensed cure, and of dabbling with possibilities in this particular. But Lord Herbert's advice that "it will become a gentleman" to be an amateur physician, points to necessities of the time, and of the rank which made such an one the earthly providence of many dependants. He adds a list of books in which they may find instruction. "You must look upon all Pharmacopœias or Antidotaries of several countries," he

adds—antidotaries being, he tells us, a part of the dispensatories; "for when poisons were in fashion, antidotes were so also. There is a book called '*Aurora Medicorum*,' very fit to be read in this kind;" and he becomes picturesque when he recommends—though "pretending no further than to give some few directions to my posterity"—the study of simples, medicines which are of vegetable origin being more "happy and safe" than any other.

"In the meanwhile, I conceive it a fine Study and worthy a gentleman to be a good Botanique, that so he may know the nature of all Herbs and Plants, being our Fellow-creatures and made for the use of man; for which purpose it will be fit for him to cull out of some good Herball all the Icones, together with the description of them, and to lay by themselves all such as grow in England, and afterwards to select again such as usually grow by the Highwayside, in Meadows, by Rivers, or in Marshes, or in Cornfields, or in dry and mountainous places, or on Rocks, Walls, or in shady places, such as grow by the Sea-side; for this being done, and the said Icones being ordinarily carried by themselves or their servants, one may presently find out every Herb he wants withall. . . . And thus much of Medicine may not only be usefull but delectable to a gentleman, since which way soever he passeth, he may find something to entertain him. I must no less commend the study of Anatomy, which whosoever considers I believe will never be an Atheist, the frame of man's body and coherence of his parts being so strange and paradoxical that I hold it to be the greatest miracle of nature; though when all is done, I do not find she hath made it so much as proof against one Disease, lest she should be thought to have made it no less than a prison to the soul."

Leaving this, which is an accomplishment belonging to the external part of life, the philosopher proceeds to recommend to his posterity the nobler virtues of the

soul. Having first “passed over all human Literature”—for he has a full appreciation of the uses of classical education, and sets them forth in their place—he pauses to note that he does not approve for elder brothers the same course of study, “as if they meant to proceed Masters of Art and Doctors in some science.” For these natural leaders of the race, in whom, as being one of them, he takes a special interest, he thinks Logic and a little Philosophy very necessary, one year being given to the latter and six months to the former subject, along with Geography, and something of the government, manners, and religions of other countries, and the use of the Celestial Globe (“I do not conceive yet the knowledge of judicial Astrology so necessary,” he adds with fine gravity, “but only for general predictions, particular events being neither intended by nor collected out of the Stars”); Arithmetick also is good, and Geometry, though the latter is “not much usefull for a gentleman, unless it be to understand fortifications.” When he has laid down these fundamental principles, he passes on to the moral virtues. That Virtue is better than learning is the burden of his teaching. “Everybody loves virtuous persons, whereas the vitious do never love one another”—a virtuous man is at home wheresoever he goes, through all the religions and all the laws of the world. In short, he says, with a kind of noble enthusiasm, “this Virtue I commend to my posterity as the greatest perfection he can attain unto in this Life, and the pledge of eternal Happiness hereafter, there being none that can justly hope for an union with the supreme God that doth not come as near to Him in this life in Virtue and Goodness as he can.” But yet if such an one falls short, there is restoration for

him; and the views of the old philosopher, looking back upon a life which has had its stormy chapters, and feeling that he has safely outlived that phase, are tolerant and merciful. He considers that sin is generally a blunder, an unfortunate accident by which “we mistook a true good for that which was only apparent,” and that though “it will be fit for every man to confess that he hath offended an infinite Majesty and Power, yet as upon better consideration he finds he did not mean infinitely to offend,” so there is no reason to suppose that an infinite punishment will be dealt to him, but only some temporal penalty here or hereafter; for “I hope none are so wicked as to sin purposely and with a high hand,” says this indulgent moralist, by whom, it is evident, long before it became a question of theological discussion, the doctrine of eternal punishment was quietly disposed of—a gentle sort of purgatorial arrangement taking its place. Herbert, however, lapses into a whimsical unconscious humour, leavened grotesquely with the fierceness of his time, when he speaks of the special virtue, among others, of forgiveness. “Certainly to such kinds of persons” (*i.e.*, women, children, and the ignorant) “Forgiveness will be proper,” he says, with admirable gravity—“in which kind I am confident no man of my time hath exceeded me; for tho’ whensoever my honour hath been engaged, no man hath ever been more forward to hazard his life, yet where with my honour I cou’d forgive, I never used revenge, as leaving it *always to God, who, the less I punish mine enemies, will inflict so much the more punishment upon them.*” This exquisite reason gave the polite and virtuous Horace Walpole, who edits Lord Herbert’s book, such a shock, that he rushes in horror into a footnote: “Is it

Forgiveness to remit a punishment on the hope of its being doubled?" he cries; but in the days of Elizabeth and James men were not so particular, and the fierce meekness of the dashing noble who had fought as many duels as he had fingers on his hand, and cannot help a thrill of remembered delight as he puts them all hot and glowing into his biography, is very diverting at least, if it is not a fine moral spectacle. Lord Herbert adds, with a sigh of conscious virtue, that he has not found this ready forgiveness of his answer: his servants, tenants, &c., whom he has freely forgiven, have only taken advantage of it to offend more frequently; but the "inward peace and comfort" he has gotten by it is beyond anything he can say.

Having thus set forth the necessity of religion and virtue, with a passing word upon temperance as "universally requisite," he recommends a wise selection of those virtues which are adapted for each several occasion—all virtues not being universally appropriate: and adds the quaint promise that "whosoever by the benefit of true Wisdom makes use of the right Virtue on all emergent occasions, *I dare say would never be constrained to have recourse to Vice.*" He then proceeds to matters more external, recommending "Rhetorick or Oratory" as an art well worth a gentleman's while to study; but warns his posterity against "an affected eloquence" as being worse than no culture at all. "Men who fortify and uphold their speeches with strong and evident reasons, have ever operated more," he says, "on the minds of the auditors than those who have made rhetorical excursions;" with an evident recollection of the Euphuism then dying out, which had been the most fashionable of follies. "It is a general note

that a man's Wit is best showed in his Answer, and his Valour in his Defence," he adds; and recommends—with the judicious and safe criticism that "neither of the two I can think so exact in their Orations but that a middle style will be of more efficacy"—Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and Cicero de *Oratore*. Then comes the outward exercise of the body, "as riding the Great Horse, Fencing, and Dancing." For the latter, "I cou'd never find leisure enough to learn it;" but as it gives "a good presence in and address to all companies," it is not unworthy consideration. These graces came to Herbert by nature; but that his posterity should all be so gifted was perhaps too much to expect. Fencing a young man should learn, "but not before he is eleven or twelve years of age." "I have had much experience both in the Fleuret or Foyle, as also when I fought in good earnest with many persons at one and the same time, as will appear in the sequell of my life. And indeed I think I shall not speak vaingloriously of myself, if I say that no man understood the use of his weapon better than I did, or hath more dexterously prevailed himself thereof on occasions; since I found no man could be hurt but through some error in fencing." Riding he gives still more space to, with all the precautions necessary to be taken to train "the Great Horse," as he invariably calls it, for battle, duels, &c., the rules for which are very precisely given. "It will be fit also for a gentleman to learn to swim," he continues, though with the addition that "in my own particular I cannot swim, for as I was once in danger of drowning by learning to swim, my mother upon her blessing charged me never to learn Swimming, telling me further that she had heard of more drowned than saved by it, which reason, though it did not

prevail with me," adds the son, dutiful though wise, "yet the commandment did,"—a sentence well worthy the study of all brisk young intellects contemptuous of maternal judgment. "Riding of racing horses" is a thing our philosopher distinctly disapproves, not only because there is "much cheating in that kind," but for the following fine reason—"Neither do I see why a brave man should delight in a creature whose chief use is to help him to run away." Hunting takes up too much time for "a man studious to get knowledge." A little bowling is to be allowed, "so that the company be choice and good;" but "the exercises I wholly condemn are Dicing and Carding." With a warning against these, the Manual closes; and we return from the wise instructions to his posterity of the old man in his leisure and contemplative age, to the young gallant who, trained and perfected by the practice he recommends, left Oxford with his household, his mother and wife, and a retinue greater than was quite appropriate either to "her widow's estate or such young beginners as we were," and set up house in London, having "attained the age betwixt eighteen and nineteen," though already a husband and father, in all the bloom of virtuous and temperate youth. Here is a very pretty anecdote of his first appearance at Court. It was "about the year of our Lord 1600" that he went to London, shortly before the attempt of the Earl of Essex; and this scene which follows soon after gives us a curious glimpse into the interior of that strange and agitated centre of life:

"Curiosity rather than ambition brought me to Court; and as it was the manner of those times for all men to kneel down before the great Queen Elizabeth, who then reigned, I was

likewise on my knees in the Presence Chamber when she passed by to the Chappel at Whitehall. As soon as she saw me she stopt, and swearing her usual oath, demanded, who is this? Everybody there present looked upon me, but no man knew me, 'till Sir James Croft, a Pensioner, finding the Queen stayed, returned back and told who I was, and that I had married Sir William Herbert of St Gillian's daughter: the Queen hereupon looked attentively upon me, and swearing again her ordinary oath, said it is pity he was married so young; and thereupon gave her hand to kiss twice, both times gently clapping me on the cheek."

This picture of "the great Queen Elizabeth" old and sad, her heart wrung with "that attempt of the Earl of Essex," and all the misery, and ingratitude, and falsehood it involved, with the hopes and plans of her imperial life dropping to pieces about her, and her days ending in storm and failure, yet with that keen perception which is a royal quality, stopping at sight of the fresh new face, the handsome stripling on his knees, and patting his healthful cheek with so natural a smile and sigh—is wonderfully interesting and pathetic. No Tudor, nor yet any Stewart, could pass over beauty and youth; and Edward Herbert came of a handsome race, and was a youth to take any observing eye. A regretful sense of that bloom that can come but once must have mingled in the Queen's graciousness to the beautiful lad, who had entered in his very childhood upon the cares of life. Nor was Herbert unaware of his own personal gifts. The next incident in his career is the accession of King James, when he was one of the gentlemen who rode out to meet the new sovereign. He got the Order of the Bath immediately after; and "I could tell how much my person was commended by the lords and ladies that came

to the solemnity then used," he says, "but I shou'd flatter myself too much if I believed it." His head, perhaps, was a little turned by praise and pageantry, and he was now for the first time exposed to the temptations of a Court, and all those enticements from which the society of his wife and mother had sheltered him at the university. Nothing so fine, so beautiful and gay, had hitherto crossed his gentle seclusion. The second day after his knighthood he had to ride from St James's to Whitehall in robes of crimson taffeta, and afterwards in still greater bravery, with the following romantic addition :—

"The third day to wear a Gown of Purple Satin, upon the left Sleeve whereof is fastened certain strings weaved of white Silk and Gold tied in a knot, and tassels to it of the same, which all the Knights are obliged to wear 'till they have done something famous in Arms, or 'till some lady of Honour take it off and fasten it on her Sleeve, saying, I will answer he shall prove a good Knight. I had not long worn this string but a principal Lady of the Court, and certainly in most men's opinion the handsomest, took mine off, and said she would pledge her Honour for mine. I do not name this lady, because some passages happened afterwards which oblige me to Silence, tho' nothing could be justly said to her prejudice or wrong."

Who this lady was, Horace Walpole says regretfully it is impossible at this distance of time to ascertain. The book was not published till 1778, when all the throbbings of the hearts under those purple gowns had long been silenced. We are glad she has escaped the gossip, this nameless lady, "the Fairest of her time ;" but for Lady Herbert, most likely just beginning to feel that her boy-husband was something to be rather proud than ashamed of, this sudden interposition of a Fairest must have been

discomposing. He had been the most virtuous of youthful mates, as he tells us ; but perhaps it was not wonderful that the seductions of the Court, and the great ladies smiling upon him, and the pledge of her honour for his, should have intoxicated the youth. Yet he kept his sobriety, and even his desire "to follow my beloved studies in a country life," for some years longer—returning to Court when duty called him, without ambition, and still less without being "tainted with corrupt delights." He was twenty-seven, an accomplished fine gentleman and person of distinction, when his life changed altogether, and he set off on his travels after the following curious discussion and settlement of affairs. The frankness, yet honest deference to his duties, of the husband, is more attractive in this scene than the demeanour of the wife ; but the voiceless person in every such record has always the worst of it, and perhaps Lady Herbert on her side saw things in a different light. Here is the account of as odd a transaction between a married pair as we remember to have known :—

"About the year 1608 my two daughters, called Beatrice and Florance, who lived not yet long after, and one son Richard, being born and come to so much maturity that, tho' in their mere childhood, they gave no little hopes of themselves for the future time, I called them all before my wife, demanding how she liked them ; to which she answered, Well. I demanded whether she was willing to do so much for them as I wou'd ; whereupon she, replying, demanded what I meant by that. I told her that, for my part, I was too young for a man, and she not old for a woman, that our Lives were in the hands of God, that if He pleased to call either of us away, that party which remained might marry again, and have children by some other, to which our Estates might

be disposed ; for preventing whereof I thought fit to motion to her that if she wou'd assure upon the Son any quantity of Land from £300 to £1000, I wou'd do the like ; but my wife not approving hereof, answered in these express words, that she would not draw the Cradle upon her head. Whereupon I, desiring her to advise better upon the business, and to take some few days' respite for that purpose, she seemed to depart from me not very well contented. About a week or ten days after, I demanded again what she thought concerning the motion I had made, to which yet she said no more, but that she thought she had already answered me sufficiently to the point. I told her then that I should make another motion to her, which was that in regard I was too young to go beyond Sea before I married her, she now wou'd give me leave awhile to see foreign countries ; howbeit if she wou'd assure her lands as I wou'd mine, in the manner above-mentioned, I wou'd never depart from her. She answered that I knew her mind before concerning that point, yet that she shou'd be sorry I went beyond sea : nevertheless if I wou'd go she could not help it. This, whether a License taken or given, served my turn to prepare without delay for a Journey beyond sea, that so I might satisfy that curiosity I long since had to see foreign countries. So that I might leave my wife so little discontented as I could, I left her not only posterity to renew the family of the Herberts of St Gillians, according to her Father's desire, to inherit his Lands, but the Rents of all the Lands she brought with her, reserving mine own partly to pay my brothers' and sisters' Portions and defraying my charges abroad. Upon which terms, though I was sorry to leave my wife, as having lived most honestly with her all this time, I thought it no such unjust ambition to attain the knowledge of foreign Countries, especially since I had in great part already attained the Languages, and that I intended not to spend any long time out of my country."

This sounds something very like a separation between the two so strangely matched ; and except in a

note that she declined to accompany him to France at a later period when he went as Ambassador, we hear no more of Lady Herbert. Her refusal to "draw the Cradle upon her head" by settling an income upon her son, and his complacent recollection that he has "left her posterity," are equally quaint and out of the way. We have not, it is true, her side of the question ; but the thoughtful young father, determined, whatever should happen, to make sure of his little boy's fortune, is more engaging than the severer withholding of the woman, in whose heart who can tell what soreness was lingering. It had been a matter of posterity altogether her marriage and her life, and perhaps she kept a bitter hold in consequence on the lands, for the sake of which she had been disposed of so summarily. As for our hero, he was always clear on the subject of his duty. He had her consent, whether willingly given or not, and he had provided for his brothers and sisters, "to gratify my mother as well as those so near me," settling upon each of his six brothers thirty pounds a-year each, and to his sisters a thousand pounds, with which portion all of them married becomingly. Clearly there was no running away from any duty in Edward Herbert's actions. He had set everything in order, and his wife had no reason to give why he should not leave her. And that head, so well stored with all the knowledge of the time, was full of a thousand adventures as well, and eager to get out into the larger world—if indeed we can describe in this light way the desire of the fine young cavalier and high-bred gentleman to see foreign countries, and perhaps flesh his maiden sword and gain himself distinction in "the Warres." There was nothing going on in England to make that pos-

sible, but "the Warres" were always in progress in Germany or somewhere else, and glory to be bought with a little bloodshed. As for that, however, our hero had already amused himself with a little duelling. Three times already he had "engaged myself to challenge men to fight with me who I conceived had injured ladies or gentlewomen," according to the oath he took when he was made a Knight of the Bath—an oath which it appears he considered himself bound by, to the great indignation and scorn of his editor, who interposes another footnote to the effect that the said oath is a piece of "profane pageantry." "It is strange mockery to invoke Heaven on so trifling an occasion," cries the elegant Horace; "and it would be more strange if every Knight, like the conscientious Lord Herbert, thought himself bound to cut a man's throat every time a Miss lost her top-knot!" Thus the eighteenth century, vastly superior in its sense and cynicism, rebukes the romance of the seventeenth. But the reader being of the nineteenth, will have more sympathy with the gallant cavalier, to whom it would have been vulgar profanity to speak of the lady who commissioned him to recover her ribband as a Miss who had lost her top-knot, than with Horace Walpole. It disturbs our ideas of the formal and grandiose life of that still romantic period, to see the French chevalier snatch Mademoiselle Ventadour's ribband from her head, like a romping schoolboy, and fasten it in his bonnet. But then the young lady was only eleven. Sir Edward Herbert, however, a fine knight-errant, was luckily at hand to vindicate her womanly claims to reverence and respect; and though his oath of the Bath is a great thing to invoke in such a quarrel, the French chevalier was glad to

be rid of his opponent, and probably behaved all the better afterwards. It is this mixture of inimitable gravity and serious meaning in so many levities which makes our knight by turns almost as fine as Quixote himself. "I can truly say that though I have lived in the armies and Courts of the greatest princes in Christendom, yet I never had a quarrel with man for mine own sake," he announces seriously. "For my friends often have I hazarded myself, but never yet drew my sword for my own sake singly, as hating ever the doing of injury, contenting myself only to resent them when they were offered to me." But not less did this gallant readiness to avenge any lady's "top-knot" get our noble young hero glory in France, where the brave Englishman's spirit and valour, as well as his handsome person and fine manners, were the admiration of everybody. He was great in society, behaving himself like a noble cavalier; and he was great in field sports, every morning mounting "the Great Horse," hunting the wolves and boars in the Duke de Montmorency's forests, and making himself a hundred friends. These were the days of Henri Quatre, who received the young visitor graciously, "embracing him in his arms;" and the fair Queen Margaret de Valois placed him publicly next to her chair, "not without the wonder of some, and the envy of another," as was natural. In this way his desire "to see strange countries" was nobly gratified. But distinguished as he was by all that was noble and beautiful, Herbert caught sight of another at Henry's Court, who was still more favoured than himself—a man with little of his own fascination, who moved him, if not to envy, at least to admiration and emulation.

"There was a sudden whisper among the ladies, saying, 'C'est Monsieur Balagny,' 'Tis Monsieur Balagny : ' whereupon also I saw the ladies and gentlewomen, one after another, invite him to sit near them ; and, which is more, when one lady had his company a while, another would say, 'You have enjoyed him long enough, I must have him now ;' at which bold civility of theirs, tho' I were astonished, yet it added to my wonder that his person could not be thought at most but ordinary handsome : his hair, which was cut very short, half grey ; his Doublet but of sackcloth, cut to his shirt, and his breeches of plain grey cloth. Informing myself by some standers-by who he was, I was told that he was one of the gallantest men in the world."

Of this Balagny and his gallantry we shall hear more hereafter. Herbert returned home in about a year's time, carrying messages from the French Court to the English ; but in 1610 was again on his way—this time to no courtly receptions or hunting of the boar, but to the Low Country, where a war had sprung up about Cleves and Juliers, to the great satisfaction of the young gentlemen who wanted to see a little fighting. He and another young Englishman, "my Lord Shandois," a knight of about his own standing, set out, with all the heat of martial adventure, to the siege of Juliers, where an English contingent was serving under Sir Edward Cecil with the troops of the Prince of Orange. The English and French for once, in the course of centuries, were fighting on the same side ; and there was great competition of valour among the young soldiers, and many a foolhardy exploit. The following incident will show how they incited each other to acts as foolish as they were daring :—

"One day Sir Edward Cecil and myself coming to the approaches that Monsieur de Balagny had made to-

wards a Bullwark or Bastion of the city, Monsieur de Balagny, in the presence of Sir Edward Cecil and diverse English and French captains then present, said, 'Monsieur, on dit que vous êtes un des plus braves de votre nation, et je suis Balagny ; allons voir qui fera le mieux'—'They say you are one of the bravest of your nation, and I am Balagny ; let us see who will do best ;' whereupon, leaping suddenly out of the Trenches with his sword drawn, I did in the like manner as suddenly follow him, both of us in the meanwhile striving who should be foremost, which being perceived by those of the Bullwark or Cortine opposite to us, three or four hundred shot at least, great and small, was made against us. Our running on forwards in emulation of each other was the cause that all the shots fell betwixt us and the trench from which we sallied. When Monsieur Balagny, finding such a storm of bullets, said, 'Par Dieu, il fait bien chaud,' 'It is very hot here,' I answered briefly thus : 'Vous en ires premier, autrement je n'iray jamais,' 'You shall go first, or else I will never go ;' whereupon he ran with all speed, and somewhat crouching towards the Trenches : I followed after, leisurely and upright, and yet came within the Trenches before they on the Bullwark or Cortine could charge again ; which passage being afterwards reported to the Prince of Orange, he said it was a strange bravado of Balagny, and that we went to an unavoidable death."

This foolish feat reminds us of Quentin Durward or some other of Sir Walter's daring heroes : but no, it is too foolish for Quentin, who had, like most of Sir Walter's heroes, a certain foundation of common-sense under his unhesitating courage. Balagny's feat is, with a far more genuine nationality, like one of the exploits of the Trois Mousquetaires ; indeed there is a certain breakfast in a bastion which occurs to us at the moment, which is extremely like this useless bit of brag—which the graver Englishman indeed outbrags, but with a sense of its folly and even stupidity,

as he marches solemnly back amid the dropping bullets.

It might have been supposed that from such a narrative we should have had some enlightening glimpses of the war and its management; but strangely enough, this is not the case. Herbert leaves the history entirely apart, summing up in a sentence all that he chooses to say of the larger current of affairs; and even that does not touch the greater question, but only his own share in it. "I could relate divers things of note *concerning myself* during the siege," he says, "but do forbear, lest I should relish too much of vanity; it shall suffice that my passing over the ditch into the wall first of all the nations there, is set down by William Crofts, Master of Arts and soldier, who hath written and printed the history of the Low Countryrs." He then proceeds to fill several pages with a very graphic account of "a particular quarrel between me and my Lord of Walden;" of the troubles he was put to to procure "a great Horse" on which to fight his duel, and the manner in which this duel was prevented; and how, in despite at the failure, he offered battle to Balagny, who refused, and finally made a sort of Berserker rush, with a passion scarcely becoming so fine a gentleman, upon a party led by Sir Thomas Somerset, retiring after he had driven them into their tents, somewhat mournfully, "finding now nothing else to be done," and having received "only a slight hurt on the outside of my ribs, and two thrusts, the one through the skirts of my doublet, and the other through my breeches, and about eighteen nicks upon my sword and hilt." These little diversions varied the course of the siege, which, save by moments, does not seem to have been exciting enough for the over-

flowing spirits of the assailants, who thus carried on a succession of private warfares on their own account and among themselves, in the most brotherly way in the world. Nothing can be more curious as an instance of the operations of the mind than Herbert's long and circumstantial account of the Scotch lieutenant who lent him his chief's horse, and would fain have accompanied him to the fray as his second, and was near losing his place in consequence had not he (Herbert) taken a great deal of trouble (among other things offering to fight "Sir James Areskine," the superior officer—always an ingratiating and conciliatory suggestion) to get his conduct explained and excused. That this trifling, if picturesque, piece of business should surge up in his mind so many years after, and be thought worthy of record for his posterity when so many matters of far greater moment must have been passing before his eyes, is wonderfully instructive and curious. The strange scraps that a capacious memory hoards up—straws and rags like the materials of a bird's nest—were never better exemplified. One would have supposed that his meetings with the great commanders who afterwards paid him so many compliments, would have been better worth recollecting than all this about Lieutenant Montgomery. But throughout this curious work there is scarcely a word which can throw any light upon the history of the time. But for the names, we should hardly be able to tell what the age was in which Sir Edward Herbert played so stirring a part. Henri Quatre does not tempt him to a single digression, nor any of the distinctions of his Court; King James might be King Anybody for all we see of him; not a gleam of perception of the character of his

contemporaries breaks across the line of romantic adventures in which he himself is the chief figure. And yet he was a man of intelligence and education much above the common, full of curiosity and a desire to understand everything he saw, not without a perception of the beautiful in nature or the picturesque in society, and with so much philosophy in him as not only to write several books, but to frame a theory of his own. With all this, Herbert moves through the excitements and dangers of the age without betraying any further interest in them than concerns his own quarrels and friendships, and informs his posterity how my Lord of So-and-so declined to fight, and my Lady had his portrait painted by "Mr Isaac, the painter in Blackfriars," and wore it in her bosom, with the painful consequences which this indiscreet admiration led to; but little more. To think of the old soldier and statesman,—he who had fought like a paladin and been renowned as one of the bravest of his nation—who had represented England worthily at the magnificent Court of France, and who, amid all the sturt and strife of his manhood, had composed a system of philosophy,—sitting down in the calm of a retired life to put down his impressions for his posterity, and leaving them only these! Nothing could be more curious than such strange deposits of memory. But though they are very inadequate to Lord Herbert's character, they are more entertaining, perhaps, than had they been more worthy. And the egotism is perfectly cheerful and straightforward, offending nobody. He could not help being aware of his many and great advantages, and it pleased him to know that they were appreciated. He has a right to feel also that his de-

scendants will be pleased; and is glad to let them know that their grandfather was a very fine gentleman, and as such received by all.

"If I may say it without vanity," he tells us, on his return to England, "I was in great esteem both in Court and city, many of the greatest desiring my company." The Lords of the Council sent for him, to make up the difference between him and the Lord of Walden; and the great Sackville, Earl of Dorset, taking him into his picture-gallery, showed him, behind a curtain of green taffeta, in a place of honour, his own portrait, "drawn by one Larkin, a painter," which was copied for no less a personage than Queen Anne herself, the wife of King Solomon, as well as for the other lady above-mentioned. It would seem, indeed, if his discreet references to "a great Person" who "sent for me divers times to attend her" are to be trusted, that the Queen herself was not unmoved by this conquering hero. But in this point his virtue was proof to all seduction, "not only for very honest Reasons, but, to speak ingenuously, because that Affection passed between me and another lady (who, I believe, was the fairest of her time), as nothing could divert it." This being the case, it was hard upon the noble lover to be set upon by Sir John Ayres, the husband of the lady who wore that portrait in her bosom—at first with four armed men, while Herbert had but two lackeys after him, one of whom ran away—and afterwards "with at least 20 or 30 persons of his friends," against whom Herbert, wounded and dismounted, with but a broken bit of his sword left (more impressive, if not more death-dealing, than Mr Irving's), stood manfully, supported by one Mr Mansel, out of Glamorganshire, and by a Scotch gentle-

man who was passing by, until (though with a dagger sticking in him, which Sir Henry Cary, afterwards Lord Falkland, the father of the noble Lucian, drew out) he had driven his adversary half dead to his boat, which lay at Whitehall stairs; for the affray occurred in a place now sacred to very different associations—Scotland Yard, to wit, the home and headquarters of justice. Imagine the sudden tumult, the wild curvetings of the wounded horse, the bleeding hero with his broken sword, and all the fierce band against him, in that dull enclosure which now houses the guardians of the public peace! The Lords of the Privy Council, of all things in the world to do, sent for the broken sword, “that they might see the little fragment of a weapon with which I had so behaved myself as perhaps the like had never been heard in any credible way;” but afterwards commanded both the belligerents to appear before them. Herbert’s danger was supposed to be so great that his friend, the Duc de Montmorency, sent a gentleman from France to invite him thither with great insistency. He was, however, as stubborn as he was brave, and would not budge; and soon, it would appear, the affair blew over, and he continued to frequent the Court, “where I had more favours than I desired.” What became of poor Lady Herbert all this time, and the “Posterity” with which her gallant husband had left her provided, we are not informed. Unless she had found other ways of amusing herself, that poor lady, who was evidently a woman not entirely given up to her nursery, must have felt life a dull affair enough.

In 1614 the wars began again, and Herbert set out at once to offer his service to the Prince of Orange,

who received him so graciously that both the English and French commanders were full of envy. Once more, however, except as respects his own exploits, the brilliant autobiographer is silent as to the history of the struggle. A certain town which he calls Rice (Rees, in the Duchy of Cleves) is the centre of the landscape, and the boldness of a reconnaissance which he made alone, and by which it was discovered that the enemy, supposed to be within reach, had disappeared, is the chief incident. Nothing can be more unlike our present bloody and business-like battles than the picture of a well-conducted, and on the whole friendly, sort of war,—something more dangerous than a tournament, but not altogether unlike it, with generous outbursts of emulation, and the most chivalrous rivalry for glory,—which is conveyed to us by his narrative. “Nothing memorable happened after this betwixt those two great Generals for the space of many weeks,” and nothing had happened before, except the peaceable yielding of a town or two, and the graceful retirement of Spinola’s army. One morning the camp was delightfully excited by the appearance of a trumpeter from the Spanish army, “with a challenge from a Spanish cavalier to this effect—that if any cavalier in our camp would fight a single combat for the sake of his mistress, the said Spaniard would meet him, upon assurance of the camp.” Who can doubt that this challenge was instantly and joyfully “accepted by me between 10 and 11 of the clock,” as soon as the report reached him? The Prince of Orange, however, threw cold water on the project; and before Herbert could reply, another trumpeter from Spinola appeared refusing to permit the challenge: where-

upon Herbert, not to be outdone, set out for the Spanish camp, to challenge that army on his own account. He did not indeed accomplish his purpose, but he was received by Spinola, coming fresh out of the headquarters of the opposing general as he did, with the same cordiality which everybody showed him; and on taking his leave, so pleased was he with the courteous Spaniard, "I told him that if ever he did lead an army against the Infidel, I shou'd adventure to be the first man who wou'd die in that quarrel." This, however, was not all; for the visitor asked leave to see the army, and inspected it, observing, with much satisfaction, "the difference in the proceedings betwixt the Low Country Army and Fortifications." Thus the war was carried on in a fashion so courtly and well-bred as to make it indeed a school of fine manners and chivalrous sentiments. How much share the rank and file had in these magnificent courtesies may be divined from the following anecdote, which, always with the same modest intention of making his own character an example to his descendants, our hero thus sets forth:—

"I must not omit with thankfulness to remember a favour his Excellency [the Prince of Orange] did me at this time—for a Soldier having killed his fellow-Soldier in the quarter where they were lodged, which is an unpardonable fault, insomuch that no man would speak for him, the poor fellow comes to me, and desires me to beg his life of his Excellency; whereupon I demanding whether he had ever heard of a man pardoned in this kind, and he saying No, I told him it was in vain then for me to speak; when the poor fellow, writhing his neck a little, said, 'Sir, but were it not better you should cast away a few words than I lose my life.' This piece of eloquence moved me so much, that I went straight to his Excellency and

told him what the poor fellow had said, desiring him to excuse me if upon these terms I took the boldness to speak for him. There was present at that time the Earl of Southampton, as also Sir Edward Cecill and Sir Horace Vere, as also Monsieur de Chastillon, and divers other French Commanders; to whom his Excellency turning himself, said in French, 'Do you see this cavalier? with all that courage you know, he hath yet that good-nature to pray for the Life of a poor Soldier: tho' I had never pardoned any before in this kind, yet I will pardon this at his request;' so commanding him to be brought over and disposed of as I thought fit, whom therefore I released and set free."

Thus all things redound to the glory of our hero. He makes a hasty journey through Italy after this, and accepts an offer made him by the Duke of Savoy to raise a regiment and command it—a commission which brings him into great danger of his life. While on this enterprise, however (which he eventually gives up), riding through Burgundy, he comes to a country inn, where the host's daughter was reported to be the handsomest woman that had ever been seen. Reason enough for our knight to pause here until he could see this prodigy, who was absent for the moment. While he waited he lay down to rest, and fell asleep, but on waking found her seated by him. The gratification he derived from the sight of her was so great, that he records her description in full. She had "hair of a shining black, naturally curled in that order that a curious woman would have dressed it; for one curl rising by degrees above another, and every Bout tied with a small ribband of a Naccarine, or the colour that the Knights of the Bath wear, gave a very graceful mixture, while it was bound up in this manner from the point of her shoulder to the crown

of her head ;" her dress of "green Turkey Grogram, cut all into Panes or Slashes," was tied up in the same way ; her eyes had a kind of light or flame in them, not unlike that which the Ribband exhibited ; a prettier mouth or whiter teeth were never seen. "In conclusion," he says, with delightful candour and self-admiration, "after about an hour's stay, I departed thence without offering so much as the least Incivility ; and indeed, after so much weariness, it was enough that her sight alone did somewhat refresh me."

We need not linger long upon the lesser incidents of this brilliant career. The next summer after these events the Low Country army was not drawn into the field, so that the Prince of Orange "past his time at playing at Chess with me after dinner ; or in going to Reswick with him to see his great Horses, or in making love ; in which also he used me as his companion." These peaceful occupations, however, ceased to furnish the excitement necessary, and Herbert returned home, not without warlike adventures on the way. At Brussels he heard the company at the Ordinary speaking ill of King James, on which "I told them in Italian—'son Inglese,' 'I am an Englishman, and should be unworthy to live if I suffered these words to be said of the King my master ;' and therewithall turning myself to those who had injured the King, I said, 'You have spoken falsely, and I will fight with you all'"—by which such a happy effect was produced, that the offenders asked the King's forgiveness, and his health was drunk all round the table. When he got to London he fell ill of a quartan ague (as we should now say, an attack of typhoid), and was just about again, ill and weak, and

so worn as to be scarcely recognisable, when, walking abroad one day towards Whitehall, he met with "one Emerson, who spoke very disgraceful words of Sir Robert Harley, being then my dear friend." This was more than our magnanimous knight could bear ; so "shaking him by a long beard he wore, I stepped a little aside and drew my sword in the street." His enemy ran away, and little harm seems to have been done ; but once more "the Lords of the Council" sent for him to hear the rights of the matter, but "did not so much reprehend my taking part with my friend, as that I would adventure to fight, being in such a bad condition of health."

But we must not pause upon all the affairs of this kind that came upon Herbert's hands. The greatest distinction of his public life, his ambassadorship, remains to be told. He had been, it would appear, a little weary of an unoccupied life for some time, had bethought himself of the Duke of Savoy's commission to raise a regiment, placing the enterprise in his brother's hand, and had taken up for his own, in company with the Earl of Oxford, a plan for "raising two regiments for the Venetians," when he was suddenly informed that out of eighteen names submitted to the king he had been chosen as Ambassador to France. This great news was so entirely unexpected, that Herbert felt little sensation but that of alarm when he was summoned to the Privy Council, before whom, on one occasion or another, he had so often appeared before. The messenger came "to my House among Gardens near the old Exchange."

"Myself little knowing then the Honour intended me, askt the Messenger whether I had done any fault

that the Lords sent for me so suddenly ? wishing him to tell the Lords that I was going to dinner, and would afterwards attend them. I had scarce dined when another Messenger was sent : this made me hasten to Whitehall, where I was no sooner come but the Lords saluted me by the name of Lord Ambassador of France. I told their Lordships, thereupon, that I was glad it was no worse, and that I doubted that by their speedy sending for me some complaint, tho' false, might be made against me."

It is sufficiently whimsical that a man appointed to a high office of State should have been alarmed like a naughty schoolboy by such a message ; but not the less for this did he fill the post magnificently. It was in 1618 that Herbert, having provided himself as well as he could with money, through the means of bankers in the city, set out to fulfil his mission. The bells were tolling for the funeral of Anne of Denmark — she who had been disposed to look with favourable eyes upon this paladin — when he rode out of London. "It was a sad spectacle," he says, "to all that had occasion to honour her." But Paris was gay enough under a young king, and full of all the wit, and caprice, and brilliant interchange of talk with which he had been once familiar. The new king, however, was not so attractive a monarch as his father, nor was the Court so brilliant. Neither in appearance nor character did Louis XIII. please the new Ambassador. He was "so extream a stuttrer that he would sometimes hold his Tongue out of his mouth a good while before he could speak so much as one word, and had, besides, a double row of teeth ;" and as he had been brought up in great ignorance, "he had the two Qualities incident to all who are Ignorantly brought up, Suspicion and Dissimulation."

The king was at the same time entirely under the dominion of the Duc de Luynes, between whom and our Envoy trouble continually arose. But in the meantime Herbert was, as ever, master of the situation. It appears to have been his intention to write a narrative of his mission, including a history of his "negotiations with the king and State," the "divers civil wars in the country," "the business of the Elector Palatine in Bohemia," and "divers other memorable accidents both of State and war." He never seems to have carried out this intention, but it explains in this portion of his autobiography the absence of reference to the greater matters of State. Herbert flatters himself, however, that his ambassadorship was of the utmost service to his countrymen. "When I came, the English and French were in very ill intelligence with each other," he says. . . . "Nevertheless, when I had been in Paris about a month, all the English were so welcome hither, that no other nation was so acceptable among them." The glimpse he affords us into the manners of the Court is not attractive, a very poor practical joke being the instance of courtier-like wit with which he presents us ; but the amusements of society furnish a prettier picture.

"Besides the time I spent in Treaties and Negotiations I had either with the Ministers of State in France or foreign ambassadors residing in Paris, I had spare time not only for my Books, but for visits to divers Grandees, for little more ends than obtaining some intelligence of the affairs of that Kingdom, and civil conversation, for which their free, generous, and cheerful company was no little motive, persons of all qualities being so addicted to have mutual Entertainment with each other, that in calm weather one might find all the noble and good company in Paris, of both sexes, either in the gar-

den of the Tuileries, or in the park of the Bois de Vincennes, they thinking it almost an Incivility to refuse their presence and free discourse to any who were capable of coming to those places, either under the recommendation of good Parts, or but so much as handsome clothes and a good Equipage: when foul weather was, they spent their time in visits at each other's houses, where they interchanged civil Discourses, or heard Musick, or fell to Dancing, using, according to the manner of that country, all the reasonable Liberties they cou'd with their Honour."

One of Herbert's great preoccupations here was to prevent the Spanish ambassador from taking precedence of him, as that solemn functionary was disposed to do. "The Spaniard then was so potent, that he seemed to affect a universal monarchy," which the other ambassadors with all their might, each man striving for himself and for his country, strenuously opposed. "All our endeavours yet could not hinder but that he both publicly prevailed in his attempts abroad, and privily did corrupt divers of the principal Ministers of State." Accordingly, the whole of the Legations were thrilled with triumph when the English ambassador, by patience and adroitness, managed to get the *pas*, and drove past his Excellency of Spain in his coach, with such a sense of victory as a great battle could scarcely have procured him.

Grave questions, however, were not wanting, and Herbert was specially charged to defend "those of the Religion," whom De Luynes lost no occasion of influencing the king against. De Luynes would have "extirpated them as the Spaniards had done the Moors;" and the Duke of Guise went the length of informing the English ambassador that "they should never be happy in France till those of

the Religion were rooted out." Herbert warned him with unconscious prophecy, that whenever those of the Religion were put down, the time of the great persons would come: which speech, he says, was fatal, since "those of the Religion were no sooner reduced to that weak condition in which now they are, but the Governors of the Provinces were brought lower, and curbed much in their power and authority, and the Duke of Guise first of them all." He had, however, stronger arguments than this, and pressed upon the French Court King James's care for the unfortunate Huguenots, "being charged to let the French king know that he would not permit their total ruin and extirpation." This persistence provoked De Luynes, who received the English remonstrances with a very bad grace, asking, "What hath the king your master to do with our Natives?" and, "We will have none of your advices." At last the altercation came to very high words indeed.

"This, tho' somewhat less than was in my instructions, so angered him, that in much passion he said, 'Par Dieu, si vous n'étiez Monsieur Ambassadeur, je vous traiterois d'un autre sorte'—'By God, if you were not Monsieur Ambassador, I would use you after another fashion.' My answer was, that as I was an Ambassador, so I was also a gentleman; and therewithall, laying my hand upon the hilt of my sword, told him there was that should make him an answer, and so arose from my chair; to which Monsieur de Luynes made no reply, but arising likewise from his chair, offered civilly to accompany me to the door; but I, telling him there was no occasion for him to use ceremony after so rude an entertainment, I departed from him."

This passage of arms occurred in front of the walls of St Jean d'Angely, the siege of which had

been begun, notwithstanding all the English ambassador's remonstrances. He withdrew with proud leisureliness, and spent three or four days examining the siege operations, sometimes venturing within reach of the cannon, before he would leave the place. His friends were in great alarm at the temerity of the stand he had made against the all-powerful Minister, and eager to induce him to put himself in some place of safety. "I told them I was in a place of safety wheresoever I had my sword by my side," says the proud Englishman. But he had, it would seem, outrun his instructions, or else the Government of the pacific James was not disposed to back up its servant at the cost of a war, and Herbert was recalled. He would have liked to "send a trumpet" with a challenge to the French Minister, but this "was not permitted." The Duc de Luynes, however, died some time after, and Herbert resumed his post. When he asked for his instructions, he tells us, much to his embarrassment he received none, but was assured that "his Majesty had that experience of my abilities and Fidelity that he would give no instructions, but leave all things to my discretion." This flattering but overwhelming responsibility he at length accepted, and on his arrival in France "began to proceed in all publick affairs according to the liberty with which my master was pleased to honour me, confining myself to no rules but those of my own discretion." He had "enough to do," he afterwards informs us—"the French being jealous that the King my master would match the Prince his son with the King of Spain's sister, and relinquish his alliance with France." And the chief incident of Herbert's second

embassy was the sudden passage through France of that same Prince and the daring favourite Buckingham, on their rash and romantic expedition to Madrid. The exciting news was brought to him one night suddenly by a Scotsman, who asked, had he seen the Prince, with startling abruptness. Herbert hastened next morning to the bedside of the French Minister, who informed him that he was aware of the journey, and had given orders for the safety of the illustrious traveller. It would have been interesting to have had any glimpse of them, hurrying across land and sea on this wild errand—the visionary Charles with his long melancholy countenance, and Steenie the dashing and splendid. But the alarm of the ambassador, and the early visit before the Frenchman had left his bed—who met him with assurances of goodwill so hearty, that Herbert sent a letter express after his Prince, "desiring him to make haste out of France, and not to treat with any of the Religious by the way, since his being at Paris was known"—are all we hear of this sudden, exciting surprise, and what came of it. There seems to have been, as there might still be, a rush of English gazers after the travellers. "Many of the nobility and others of the English Court being now desirous to see the Prince, did pass through France to Spain, taking my house by the way." And it was by one of these followers that Herbert sent another letter, professing his grief not to have received his Prince on the road,—“which occasioned,” he says with courtly satisfaction, “his Highness afterwards to write a letter to me wholly with his own hand, and subscribe his name, your Friend CHARLES, in which he did abundantly satisfy all the Unkind-

ness I might conceive on this occasion."

This is about the last incident Herbert narrates; but there are many encounters of wit, and bold adaptations of the tools of diplomacy, which he records with pleasure and a fine complacency, in order that his posterity, personally interested in his credit, may have the satisfaction of seeing that he was always equal to what was required of him. On one occasion he was visited unexpectedly by an envoy from Spain on his way to England, the Count de Gondomar, whose object it seems to have been to trick the English ambassador into a show of intimacy, such as might give umbrage to the Court to which he was accredited. Gondomar desired that the coach of the ambassador should accompany him out of Paris; but Herbert was too wary to fall into the snare of the Spaniard. "I told him, after a free and merry manner, he should not have my coach, and that if he demanded it, it was not because he needed coaches—the Pope's Nuntio, the Emperor's Ambassador, the Duke of Bavaria's agent, having coaches enough to furnish him—but because he would put a Jealousie betwixt me and the French." The Spaniard then proposed to dine with him; but neither in that way would Herbert commit himself. His excuse was, that if the ambassador of so great a king dined with him, it should be "at a Feast worthy of so great a person,"—and to mark his refusal, he adopted the following expedient:—

"I desired some of my Gentlemen to bring his Gentlemen into the Kitchen, where after my usual manner were three Spits full of Meat, divers pots of boyled Meat, and an oven with store of Pyes in it, and a Dinner Board covered with all manner of good Fowle

and some Tarts, Pans with Tarts in them after the French fashion; after which being conducted to another room, they were showed a Dozen or sixteen dishes of Sweetmeats, all which was but the ordinary allowance for my Table. The Spaniards returning now to Gondomar, told him what Good Chere they found, notwithstanding which I told Gondomar again that I desired to be excused if I thought this Dinner unworthy of him, and that when occasion was I should entertain him after a much better manner."

This astute manner of convincing the Spaniard how completely the Englishman saw through his device had an excellent effect, and proved to the envoy that here was a diplomatist worthy of his steel,—“a man fit for Employment,” as he puts it. “He thought that an Englishman had not known how to avoid handsomely a Trick put upon him under show of civility.” Our hero is not so successful in his *bons mots*, several of which he takes pains to report. But it is evident that the English honour was safe in his hands, and no slight of any kind likely to be passed over. One of the last of his social passages of arms was in reference to a sermon delivered by the king's confessor, Père Seguerand, while the war “against those of the Religion” was still going on, in which the priest maintained that forgiveness of our enemies did not imply forgiveness of Heretics, who were the enemies of God. Upon this our ambassador, in hot indignation, went to the queen, pointing out to her that to permit such discourses to be held of “the Religion,” on the eve of concluding a treaty of marriage with England, “I could not but think very unreasonable,” with a desire that “such doctrines henceforth might be silenced.” The answer of the priest, when informed of this, was significant, all the more in the light

of that approaching marriage,—“he wisht me to be assured that where-soever I was in the world he would hinder my Fortune.” What he did afterwards in fulfilment of this threat, Herbert professes he did not know; “but sure am I that had I been ambitious of worldly greatness, I might have often remembered his words; tho’ as I ever loved my book and a private life more than any busy Preferments, I did frustrate and render vain his greatest power to harm me.”

Notwithstanding this disclaimer, there is little in Lord Herbert’s life (he had by this time attained at last the Irish peerage, which preceded his elevation to that rank in England) to lead us to suppose that he was so unambitious as he says—but he was a man of many sides, as other records prove. Nothing can be more curious than the thought that a man so thoroughly involved in all the most stirring traffic of his time, with his hand ever ready at his sword-hilt, and his spirit up at every note of adventure, should be all the time composing in his hours of privacy a philosophical treatise upon the profoundest subjects, and in the language of the learned. A brilliant lay of romance, a troubadour’s song, would have been much more like the image of himself which he sets before us—which is that, as the reader has seen, of a knight of romance, faithful to the most fantastic letter of his vows, ready to snatch at any opportunity of distinction, and feeling that “the danger’s self were lure alone” to any adventure. How he contrived—as he sheathed, with his fine bow, the sword which he had drawn for pure love of fighting, and in no national quarrel, and put on the gold lace and splendours of an

ambassador at the gayest court in Christendom—to occupy his thoughts and his time with such abstract study, it is very difficult to conceive. And save a passing reference to “my Book,” we hear nothing of any literary purpose until he has reached the last page of his delightful tale, when he takes the reader into his confidence suddenly, though it is to tell him of a marvellous incident connected with the book, rather than anything about its character or composition. Perhaps he felt with the philosophy that is taught by years, that his “Posterity,” fine gentlemen and patricians as he intended them to be, were likely to care far less about this achievement than about the duels and the noble figure their ancestor had made in the world. “My book, ‘De Veritate, prout distinguitur a Revelatione, a Verisimili, a Possibili, et a Falso,’” he says, “having been begun by me in England, and formed there in all its parts, was about this time (the end of his second embassy) finished: all the spare hours which I could get from my Visits and negotiations being employed to perfect this work.” Thus in all the affrays about Whitehall, and amid the favours, “more than I desired,” which he had at Court, he was pondering how to discover abstract truth, and attempting to work out the strange, often-discussed, never-solved problem as to the provability of authentic communications from the Unseen. Strangest background to that life of pleasure and adventure! The broken sword with which he met Sir John Ayres and his band is the most wonderful companion to the pen with which he traced all these processes of serious thought. The work itself is of too profound a character to be treated here. Hallam, in his analysis of it in the ‘History of

Literature,' avows that he finds it "very difficult to follow Lord Herbert." The only impression it has left on the general intelligence—dim reflex of what the better instructed have said of it—refers to his views upon Revelation, which he seems to have considered unnecessary,—the innate principles of natural religion being enough, in his opinion, for human guidance. "If any one has a revelation from heaven in addition to these" (we quote from Mr Hallam) "which may happen to him, sleeping or waking, he should keep it to himself, since nothing can be of importance to the human race which is not established by the evidence of their common faculties." On this ground he has been ranked among deistical philosophers, a title which to the common mind implies not much less irreligiousness than the entirely different epithet of atheist. But there are two ways of holding such an opinion—that which scoffs at Revelation altogether, and that which regards it as always a possible and likely, if not general, mode of spiritual instruction. That this was Lord Herbert's belief is evident from the following wonderful narrative. He had sent his book to Grotius and certain other philosophers for their judgment, and had been urged by them to publish it, but still hesitated. For "as the form of my whole book was so different from anything which had been written heretofore, I found I must either renounce the authority of all that had written previously concerning the method of finding out Truth, and consequently insist upon my own way, or hazard myself to a general censure concerning the whole argument of my book." To solve his scruples, he had recourse to the following sublime and primitive expedient:—

"Being thus doubtfull in my chamber, one fair day in the summer, my casement being opened towards the south, the sun shining clear and no wind stirring, I took my book 'De Veritate' in my hand, and kneeling on my knees devoutly, said these words :

"*O Thou Eternal Author of the Light that now shines upon me, and Giver of all inward illuminations, I do beseech Thee of Thy infinite Goodness to pardon a greater Request than a Sinner ought to make. I am not satisfied enough whether I should publish this Book, "De Veritate." If it be for Thy Glory, I beseech Thee give me some sign from Heaven ; if not, I shall suppress it.*"

"I had no sooner spoken these words but a loud though yet gentle noise came from the Heavens (for it was like nothing on earth), which did so comfort and cheer me, that I took my Petition as granted, and that I had the sign I demanded, whereupon also I resolved to print my Book. This (how strange soever it may seem) I protest before the Eternal God is true, neither am I any way superstitiously deceived herein, since I did not only clearly hear the noise, but in the serenest sky that ever I saw, being without all cloud, did to my thinking see the place from whence it came."

Imagine all antique Paris in gay and brilliant ripple of life,—cavaliers all curled and plumed and ribboned, fair ladies moving stately in velvet and pearls, great gilded coaches lumbering along with many lackeys, running footmen to clear the way,—and through the great open casement in the noble Faubourg over some still old-fashioned garden the heavenly response, loud yet gentle, sounding from that "serenest sky" !

With this most wonderful scene, which glows upon the page like an old clear picture of the early Italian prime, Lord Herbert's account of himself comes to a sudden end. He had his book printed in Paris "at my own cost and charges, without suffering it to be divulged

to others than to such as I thought might be worthy Readers of it," which, according to our prosaic phraseology, would mean that it was not published, but printed for private circulation. But by and by it was in the hands of all the first scholars of Europe, and was sought after from "the furtherest parts of Christendom," with a promise of "anything I should desire by way of return." "But hereof more amply in its place," the author adds, with an intention of continuing which he never carried out, for what reasons we are not informed.

He lived until the eve of the disastrous conclusion of Charles's struggle with his Parliament, taking first—a course which was somewhat strange in such a man—the side of the people. It would have been curious to know his opinion, cavalier to his finger-points as he was, and to understand what led him to rank himself on the side opposite to that which he belonged to by nature. His book, however, breaks off abruptly with what may perhaps be reckoned the first step in that conflict—the betrothal of Charles to Henrietta Maria. It is open to conjecture that the bold priest who threatened Herbert that wheresoever he was in the world he would hinder his fortune, may have procured him disfavour with the new queen, and so influenced his after opinion: but this is mere supposition. He wrote several other works, both philosophical and historical: he was, as we have said, the first of English autobiographers, and he has left us a picture, quite unsurpassable, of the cavalier and magnanimous graceful noble of his time. It is curious that he should have left out all that would have complicated

this ideal, and made it perhaps less perfect as a picture, but more interesting as a study of human character. Perhaps he intended "more amply in its place" to record the development of mind which makes to us the name of Lord Herbert of Cherbury so distinct from every other cavalier of his period; or perhaps, as we have suggested, this finest of chivalrous gentlemen had philosophy enough to feel that the outside of him and all his courtly ways—his victorious fighting and favour with princes, and fine clothes and magnificent living, would be more delightful to his posterity than anything about books. In any case this is how we have him. The portrait which Horace Walpole prefixed to the autobiography, shows us a countenance full of poetry and passion but little represented in the stirring and animated narrative; and to give the reader at least a glimpse of this other side of Lord Herbert's character, we take from Mr Ward's admirable collection of English poets* (in which the "critical introduction" of each author forms a novel and most instructive and interesting addition) a portion of a poem which expresses a very high and noble philosophy in the language of Love—an unfamiliar but lofty harmony. Here are two lovers in a spring landscape, turning their eyes to heaven, "as if no glass but that could represent so great and pure a love:"—

"When with a sweet though troubled look
She first broke silence, saying, 'Dear
friend,
O that our love might take no end,
Or never had beginning took!'"

To which the lover replies with a

* The English Poets: Selections, with Critical Introductions by Various Writers. Edited by T. H. Ward. Macmillan: 1880.

tender gravity in which, as well as in the measure, there is a noble sort of kindred with much of Mr Tennyson's finest verse, though dashed with a few of the metaphysical conceits which were of the elder poet's age :—

“ ‘ Oh no, Belov'd ; I am most sure
These virtuous habits we acquire,
As being with the soul entire,
Must with it evermore endure.

Else should our souls in vain elect,
And vainer yet were Nature's laws,
When to an everlasting cause
They give a perishing effect.

Not here on earth, then, nor above,
Our good affections can impair ;
For where God doth admit the fair,
Think you that He excludeth Love ?

These eyes again thine eyes shall see,
These hands again thine hand enfold,
And all chaste blessings ever told
Shall with us everlasting be.

For if no use of sense remain,
When bodies once this life forsake ;
Or they could no delight partake,
Why should they ever rise again ?

And if even my imperfect mind
Make love the end of knowledge here,
How perfect will our love be where
All imperfection is refin'd !

Let then, no doubt, Celinda, touch,
Much less your fairest mind invade :
Were not our souls immortal made,
Our equal loves can make them such.

So when from hence we shall be gone,
And be no more nor you nor I—
As one another's mystery,
Each shall be both, yet both but one. ’ ”

Might not this soft breath of lovely thought have floated out of Herbert's "serenest sky" into the very heart of the "In Memoriam," that greatest song of love and death, — the quintessence of mourning and faithfulness and hope ?

THE HIGHLAND TARTAN.

DEAR to each Highland soldier's heart
The Tartan of his clan,
Symbol of glory and of pride
To every Highland man,
Whether he dwell 'mid Athole's hills,
Or where the winding Tay,
By Birnam's glens and forests fair,
To ocean wends its way;
Or nearer to the northern star,
Where snows the mountain crown,
And towering over silver lakes,
Stern peaks of granite frown.

In every country, far or near,
Where Highland men are known,
The Tartan plaid is greeted still
With homage all its own.
Still to the Pibroch's stirring strains
On many a foreign shore,
The Highland clans press nobly on
To victory, as of yore.
True to traditions of the past,
True to their ancient fame,
May Caledonia's children add
Fresh glories to her name.

JANETTA MANNERS.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

It is not yet ten months since, amidst songs of triumph and boastings, such as seldom have accompanied a political victory in this self-possessed country, the hero of Mid-Lothian acceded to power, and formed what was thought to be the strongest Government of modern times; yet on the day we commence this article, the principal daily organ of the Radical party* occupies itself with imploring the Prime Minister neither to resign nor dissolve in the event of a probable defeat on the coming Land Bill!

What, in so short a space of time, has produced so great a change in the fortunes and demeanour of triumphant Radicalism? And why is confidence conspicuous in the ranks of the Conservative minority, while doubt and division brood over the troubled sections of the unwieldy majority?

The answer is not far to seek. In Opposition, their leaders and spokesmen cast moderation, fairness, and patriotism, to the winds, and they are now confronted and appalled by the Nemesis of unfulfilled pledges and impossible policies.

Contrasted with the programme submitted to the country last April by Mr Gladstone, Lord Hartington, and Mr Bright, that presented by Lord Beaconsfield and his colleagues appeared humdrum and commonplace; but what moderate Whig is there who does not perceive and acknowledge that the peace of Europe, the integrity of the empire, and the welfare of Ireland, have all been compromised or endangered by the rash preference accorded to the former statesmen by the electorate of the three kingdoms?

The peace of Europe, nearly sacrificed in the autumn to the

anti-Turkish prejudices of Mr Gladstone, and only preserved by the restraining wisdom of Germany and Austria—whose close alliance had been, a few months before, the subject of his denunciation—is again trembling in the balance. This renewed uncertainty springs directly from the baleful encouragement given by the Premier and Sir C. Dilke to the exaggerated pretensions of Greece, confirmed in appearance by the absurd recommendations of the Berlin Conference, which, we now learn from Austrian and German authority, were only accepted by the other great Powers in deference to the urgency of France and England!

The recent action of French diplomacy, and the language of French public men, leave little doubt that the real clue to the decisions of the Conference is to be found in the instructions from Lord Granville to the English representatives that they should give their best attention to the representations of M. Brailas Armeni,† the Greek agent, who virtually dictated the preposterous boundary to which our Government clung after the proposals of the Conference had been repudiated by all the other Powers. Thus then, relying on unofficial encouragement given in Opposition, and on diplomatic support rendered in Government, the unfortunate Greeks have ruined themselves by warlike preparations beyond their means, and awake too late to a perception of the bitter truth that, like the Irish and the Boers, they have been used for the purpose of helping English Radicals to gain office, and must now give their former patrons no more trouble. If, however, they accept the

* Daily News, Feb. 10, 1881.

† Blue-book, Greece, No. 3, p. 2.

new advice, and refrain from breaking the peace of Europe, it will be to France, Germany, and Austria that the peaceful solution of this threatening question will be due, and not to the English Government presided over by Mr Gladstone.

It may seem to some that the integrity of the empire, now that the Government have declared their hostility to Home Rule, have refused to abandon Cyprus, and have gone to war with the Boers in order to retain the Transvaal, is no longer in danger; but we see little substantial ground for that comforting conviction. The whole tenor of Liberal permanent legislation for Ireland is in favour of separation. One by one the links that bound Ireland to England are being severed, and step by step power in Ireland is being transferred from the loyal, intelligent, and propertied classes, to the ignorant followers, dupes, and agents of popular agitation; while the avowed policy of the Government in Affghanistan affords too much reason for fearing that when, at a frightful cost of British and Irish blood and treasure, the Queen's supremacy has been re-established over the Transvaal, a retreat will be ordered, and the astounded people at home be gravely congratulated on being relieved from the burden of a useless and expensive dependency.

The evacuation of Affghanistan, to be completed by the withdrawal from Candahar, is admitted by nine out of every ten Indian authorities to be fraught alike with external and internal danger to our Eastern empire. To Russia it is a proof that she has nothing to fear; to Persia, and to the still unconquered tribes of Central Asia, proof that they have nothing to hope from our influence or our arms; but within our own border the effect, if less apparent, will be more disastrous.

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From the Indus to Cape Comorin the natives will understand and feel that we have ceased to be not merely a conquering, but even a resisting race; and that, sooner than confront the difficulties and expense of retaining a defensive conquest, we prefer to abandon it to an enemy, or to anarchy, indifferent alike to our reputation and to the claims of those who had espoused our cause and received our fatal promises of friendship and protection. Nor is it likely that the influence of this retreat will be confined to Asia. When, under Lord Beaconsfield's Administration, England re-assumed her proper status in Europe, her most distant colonies felt the thrill of imperial patriotism, and Australia and Canada proffered their armed assistance; but now, the policy which yielded the Ionian Islands and St Juan, and capitulated at Washington, is again in the ascendant, and the vast empire which was animated by one spirit and spoke with one voice in 1878, to the astonishment of Europe, is fast relapsing into the congeries of semi-detached provinces and dependencies to which Mr Gladstone's rule had reduced her in 1874.

The material and social improvement of Ireland, which had been marked and satisfactory until temporarily arrested by the partial famine of 1879, was deliberately jeopardised in the summer of last year by the refusal of the new Cabinet to renew the mild Peace Preservation Act bequeathed to them by their predecessors. All experience had shown that without peace and order there could be no such thing as Irish prosperity; and the Government, disregarding the warnings of the outgoing Irish Executive, and of the highest permanent Irish authorities, elected to meet the Land League, with its Fenian and Ribbon allies, armed

only with the powers of the ordinary law. Why? The real answer we believe to be the Ministerial conviction that the session would be occupied by the attempt to renew the Act; and they deliberately postponed the tranquillity and welfare of Ireland to gratify Welsh and English Nonconformists with a Burials Bill, and Scotch and English farmers with the ridiculous privilege of shooting their landlords' hares and rabbits. Thenceforward the downward march of events in Ireland was sure and rapid. The only mode of arresting it was patent to all men—except some in the Cabinet; and every day's delay in adopting it intensified the mischief, and added to its area. At last, when public indignation could no longer be disregarded, Parliament was summoned, and the most stringent Coercion Bill of modern times has been proposed by the Minister who six months ago derided the advice of his predecessor. On the ill-conducted and abortive Dublin trial, on the weak and vacillating conduct of the Irish Executive in the disturbed districts, we will not dwell; it is sufficient to say that the first determined act of opposition to the organised terrorism of the League was that of the Ulster expedition to Claremorris, and that the sufferers and victims of that cowardly conspiracy found protectors, not in the Government, but in the Orange Society.

Since Parliament met, the country has followed with perplexed impatience the scenes of which the House of Commons has been the theatre; and although barely six weeks have elapsed, and beyond passing a Coercion Bill little or nothing has been done, the future historian (not, we may hope, Mr Justin M'Carthy) will have to point to those stirring days and sleepless nights as giving the first indica-

tions of the approaching disruption of the Whig-Radical combination. We do not say that the Ministerial majority is sensibly diminished, or that a change of Government is at hand; but we assert that the whole treatment of Ireland by Mr Gladstone and Mr Forster has been, and is, and probably will continue to be, so reckless, so unprincipled, and so inconsistent, as to deprive their Administration of the support and confidence of all serious politicians, and of all interested in the welfare of that country. The provisions of the Land Bill are still unknown: but on the one hand, the recommendations of the two Royal Commissions and the utterances of the Prime Minister are before us; and on the other, the leaders of the League have defined clearly the character and extent of their demands. While the object of land legislation ought to be the encouragement of a resident educated proprietary who should employ the peasantry at good and constant wages, and the introduction of fresh capital for the development not only of agricultural but of other industries, the avowed object of the League is the substitution of a poor, unlettered, grasping, and unimproving class of tenant-farmers for that of the gentry, and the transference of all political and social power to the hands of the former. The measure of the Government must tend in one direction or the other. If it inclines to the first, the rage and fury of the Irish democrats and their Scotch and English allies, will be vehement: if to the latter, the just and serious apprehensions of all interested in property, whether Irish, Scotch, or English, will be necessarily excited; and in the long and angry debates which must ensue, that disintegration of the composite majority, the premonitory symptoms of which we have

just noticed, will probably assume overt shape and form. In the one case, the ultra-Radicals will exclaim that they were deceived into voting for an odious Coercion Bill by the promise of "a good and satisfactory measure" of land reform, which has not been fulfilled; in the other, the Whig element of the party — numerically and intellectually stronger than is generally supposed — will be hopelessly and permanently alienated by persistence in a policy of which last session they had expressed their condemnation, and the speedy application of which to England and Scotland they foresee with the unerring instinct of self-preservation. It is not easy to define accurately the component parts of the existing Whig-Radical majority, but the subjoined analysis of the House of Commons will approximate to the truth:—

Present number of members,	652
Liberals,	335
Tories,	240
Home-Rulers,	62
Speaker and seats vacant,	15
	—652

Of the 335 Whig-Radicals, it would probably be fair to class 200 as Whigs, 135 as Radicals; but the events of the last month necessitate a rearrangement of the 62 members heretofore classed as Home-Rulers: the Home Rule movement has died the death which the most eloquent advocate of separation, Mr Smyth, prophesied for it in the last Parliament; and the party which then followed Mr Butt, and subsequently disobeyed Mr Shaw, is now split into two nearly equal hostile factions. Of these, the larger, numbering about 33, adhere to Mr Parnell and the democratic Land League; the remainder are feeling their way back gradually to the more agreeable and respectable fold of official Liberalism. It may be assumed that the former, on all subjects of general policy, whether

domestic or foreign, will throw in their lot with the Radicals, the latter with the Whigs. One permanent good result has thus come out of the short-lived triumph of the Land League; the incapacity of the present race of Irishmen for self-government has been demonstrated on the most august stage in the eyes of the world, and that demonstration has proved fatal to the existence of the Home Rule party. The Imperial Government and Parliament now know with what they have to deal in attempting to rule Ireland as an integral part of the empire.

There remain to be considered the 240 members who constitute the Tory party: fortunately for the country, no analysis or subdivision is here requisite. Never was a party connection more united, because never was one more agreed in principle. Nor in estimating its power should we be justified in omitting all reference to the House of Lords.

The Radical rump who last summer thought the English working men could be excited against the Peers in consequence of their rejection of the Irish Confiscation Bill, soon discovered their mistake; and the House of Lords is now armed not only with its own inherent powers, but with the assurance that, in its just and salutary exercise of them, it will have the country at its back: and the memorable division on that Irish Bill remains a standing warning to Liberal statesmen that, irrespective of party, the House of Lords is prepared to vindicate the just rights of property in all the three kingdoms.

Thus, relatively strong in one House, and absolutely dominant in the other, the Conservative party, assuming it to have confidence in its principles and in its leaders, may confront the future with hopefulness and good courage.

With respect to its principles, never perhaps in these modern days was there less reason to question their truth and wisdom. It needs but a glance at the present condition of Ireland—in which country they have been most conspicuously set at naught—to convince thoughtful men that in an ancient monarchy and a balanced polity they cannot be violated with impunity. It was out of the ruins of the Irish Church that Home Rule sprang into existence; and it is to the exaggerated expectations and delusive hopes excited by the Land Act of 1870 that we owe the fungus-growth of the Land League. Admitting that our leaders erred in the moment selected for the Dissolution, their conduct ever since has been such as to win for them the respect of opponents, and the increased confidence and admiration of their followers. Contrast the demeanour and language of Lord Beaconsfield last spring, when the new Parliament met, with Mr Gladstone's in 1874! In both Houses the Opposition at once accepted their new position, and discharged its duties without manifesting the least symptom of petulance, mortification, or despair. Last session indeed, throughout the discreditable Bradlaugh debates, it was Sir Stafford Northcote who acted as leader of the House of Commons, and so inaugurated that hold upon its members which his conduct and language throughout the last six weeks have done so much to strengthen and increase. It is not often that leaders of Opposition, smarting under a sense of unmerited abuse showered upon them by their successful rivals a few months before, are content to efface themselves in order to render more effective support to those rivals in their tardy attempt to cope with an anarchy of their own

creation. Yet this is what Sir Stafford Northcote and his colleagues have done throughout the weary struggle on the measure for the better protection of life and property in Ireland. Noble and magnanimous, however, as this policy is, there was at one moment a danger of its being carried too far. Baffled and exasperated by the drilled and skilled obstruction of the Irish members, and conscious that the Speaker could not be expected to repeat against them the *coup d'état* of that historic Wednesday morning, the Government submitted in hot haste to the House, still smarting under the inconvenience and indignity to which it had been subjected, a Draconian code of procedure by which an angry majority might readily silence a troublesome minority. To an assembly more inclined than ever to regard with favour any such project by the unprecedented violence offered by Mr Parnell and his friends to the forms of the House and the ruling of the Speaker, this code was the following day recommended by Mr Gladstone in a speech of marvellous eloquence, pathos, and dramatic power. Following immediately upon that disgraceful scene, it carried all its hearers away, and Liberals and Conservatives alike were indisposed to question any part of the scheme. But while doing full justice to the motives and the eloquence of the Prime Minister, the leader of the Opposition discriminated accurately between the provisions which would prevent the persistent obstruction of a faction, and those which would enable an unscrupulous Minister, a facile Speaker, and a tyrannical majority to overbear a constitutional opposition; and having so discriminated accurately, he adhered firmly to his amendments: and it is just to the Minister to say that all of them, in letter or in substance,

were ultimately accepted. But it is to Sir Stafford Northcote primarily that the House owes its escape from a great and pressing danger. Again, the salutary modifications introduced by the Speaker into the three New Rules of Feb. 17th are due entirely to the firm, yet conciliatory, interposition of Sir Stafford, and the whole House and the country have additional reason to be thankful that the Prime Minister once more abandoned his original intention at the instance of the wiser leader of the Opposition. Whether, if the Speaker had acted on the advice tendered him on the Tuesday night by Sir Richard Cross and Mr W. H. Smith, the subsequent *coup d'état* and the new rules might not have been avoided, is a question into which it is now useless to enter; but the whole conduct of our leaders throughout those trying scenes has not only deepened the allegiance of their party, but spread and enlarged their influence in the country.

And now to conclude,—In what light does the political situation present itself to the country?

We have sketched shortly the wide divergence between the pledges and promises of the leading Ministers and their performances, so far as the peace of Europe, the integrity of the empire, and the welfare of Ireland are concerned. There remains to be considered that favourite topic on which Mr Gladstone and his worshippers were never tired of enlarging—retrenchment. "A profligate imperialism has," it was said, "swollen the expenditure, and saddled the taxpayer with a crushing and unnecessary financial burden. Trust once more the conduct of affairs to the statesman who in 1874 would have repealed the income-tax, and you will, in exchange for a little worthless prestige, obtain the inestimable blessing of reduced taxation."

Last year the country was a little astonished when, instead of a reduction, it was treated to an addition to the income-tax, and to a substitution of a beer-tax for the malt-duty, designed to bring in not less but more money to the Exchequer. It, however, reflected that the estimates of the year had been prepared by the profligate Tories, and waited hopefully for the financial deliverance promised it in 1881, when the estimates of a peace-loving Government would bear unmistakable witness to the sincerity of their promises of retrenchment. But lo! instead of reduction, the estimates of both the great spending departments—army and navy—disclose an increase amounting together to no less a sum than £363,000, and the admitted failure of that pet nostrum of doctrinaire radicalism, short service, will compel some further expenditure in future years on the effective services. The weighty, eloquent, and statesmanlike appeal which Sir Frederick Roberts has just made to his countrymen on behalf of that noble profession, of which he is one of the brightest ornaments, cannot fail to bear substantial fruit; but while we hail with delight the prospect of a return to a longer service, we are prepared to find that the substitution of an effective army for an imaginary reserve cannot be accomplished without additional expenditure. Nothing short of a deep conviction that it was his duty to the country to expose the inadequacy of the Cardwellian organisation, and to make emphatically public his experiences of the evils of the short service system, could have induced General Roberts to indict with such manly frankness our present military tendencies in the presence of the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary-at-War. The automatic increase of the Civil Service estimates has be-

come an established fact, and consequently the country now knows that its expenditure during the first year of the new Government's financial management considerably exceeds that of the last year of their predecessors. Of reform nothing is heard beyond a vague allusion in the Queen's Speech to a new system of county government in Ireland, by which it is hoped to extend "the formation of habits of local self-government"! The admitted state of that country suggests a doubt whether the paragraph in question is not ironical.

Such, then, are the main features of the actual political situation. What is the prospect of the country being soon asked to deliver its verdict upon them? Were anybody but Mr Gladstone at the head of affairs, we should say a dissolution this year was in the highest degree improbable; but in the not unlikely event of his Land Bill encountering a check, we would advise our friends to be prepared for an appeal to the existing constituencies: and short as would then have been the period granted for reflection, we feel confident that many a borough and many a county would reverse the hasty decision it gave last spring in favour of the already discredited Whig-Radical condition. The unopposed return of Mr Phipps for South Northamptonshire, and the largely increased Conservative majority at Wigan, following the victories at Liverpool and Berwick, augur well for the good cause in England; while the gain of Buteshire and the Wigtown Burghs ought to encourage our friends on the north side of the Tweed to attempt the recapture of those seats which were lost last year. But though possible, a dissolution

this year is not probable; and on the whole, we think it more likely to take place in 1883 than in 1882. By that time the Reform Bills to which the Government are so deeply committed will either have become law, or been rejected; and in either case an appeal to the country is inevitable. What would be the result of so great a redistribution of electoral power as must follow household suffrage in the counties, and the consequent rearrangement of constituencies, it is useless to inquire. But looking back to the past history of the Tory party, we see no reason to dread the effect of any such changes on their political fortunes. That the difficulties even now felt to be yearly increasing in the way of administering the affairs of the empire would be seriously aggravated, can hardly be doubted; but that the Whig or Radical party would gain an accession of political strength, is quite another matter.

It may be that social rather than political issues will be tried at the bar of a purely democratic electorate; and that, tired of waiting for that free-trade millennium which appears to be now further off than ever, the working people of town and country will indicate their preference for a policy which shall, to some extent, protect their industry from the destructive effects of foreign bounties and prohibitory tariffs. If so, it will be to the Tory party that the industrial classes will have to look, not only for the preservation of those great and sacred institutions which are as dear to them as to any other section of the community, but for that reform of our fiscal system which shall enable them to earn "a fair day's wage for a fair day's work."

BLACKWOOD'S

EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCLXXXVI.

APRIL 1881.

VOL. CXXIX.

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY—PART VI.

CHAPTER XV.

BITTER although the sense of degradation had been to Hilda in applying to Clifford for employment, the salary derived from her engagement with him had transformed the penury of the household in the little cottage at Rainham into comparative affluence, and one of the first uses, after outstanding bills had been paid, to which Hilda put her increase of income, was to send her little brother to school. Her father demurred a little to this when first it was proposed; it would be rather hard on him, he said, to be left so much alone. He was a kind man in his way, and liked to have the child about him; but he at once acquiesced when Hilda urged the importance of removing Arthur from his brother's influence, already doing him harm. And as Hilda was unable to spare the time for arranging the matter, the Captain undertook to look out for a cheap and suitable school, which was soon found at the not distant town of Slaye, whither Arthur was duly

conveyed by his father. The Captain also now conducted the shopping required for the little household, and Hilda made over the money to him for the weekly bills. She would have liked to see the receipts, too, but her father professed to be so much distressed at the imputation implied in the request, that she did not press the point. "I flatter myself that I am a tolerable man of business, Hilda," he said; "is it likely that I should pay money away without taking a receipt?" Which, however, was not quite to the point, and Hilda could not but feel uneasy at times lest another money crisis should be impending, notwithstanding Clifford's generosity. There, however, she did her father injustice: he paid the bills weekly, as he had promised he would, and kept all the tradesmen's books in the drawer of his writing-table, with all his business letters and prospectuses. And his time being now fully occupied, as he said, between house-

keeping and letter-writing, he began again to assume something of his old manner of importance.

For Reid was now a great letter-writer. When first he applied for assistance to some of his old brother officers and acquaintances, the generous response made quite exceeded his expectations; and if it did not prove the high estimation in which he was held by them, as the Captain interpreted the case, it at least showed how much generosity there was in the world. But the sums thus coming in were after all but small, for Reid's old friends, mostly retired officers like himself, were not rich men, and the idea gradually suggested itself that there must be a large stream of general benevolence available, which, if tapped properly, could be made to flow towards himself; and he made a beginning at last of applying for help to strangers. The appeal in most cases indeed proved ineffectual, but the residuum of favourable answers was sufficiently large to make the repeating it a profitable application of time. And Reid had accordingly developed into a regular genteel begging letter-writer. He would probably have been indignant had such a title been given him. He did not spend the money on himself, he would have said, which was true in the main; he was a man of simple wants, and if he could wear a decent coat, and smoke his pipe, and drink his glass of gin-and-water of an evening, and get a little fishing, he was quite satisfied. He would have termed his outlay merely an investment of capital; for the money he got in this way went mostly in buying small mining shares or foreign lottery-tickets, or some such speculation, which might possibly bring an enormous return. And probably he had some hazy notion in his head of paying back all these gifts

some day, whenever the great speculative *coup* should be effected which he was always looking out for. It was this accomplishment as a letter-writer which had been the means of introducing him to Clifford. Hilda, apprehensive of what the probable consequences would be, should the nature of her engagement become known to either father or brother, had insisted from the first on their making no inquiries on the subject: she declared if she were followed up or traced she would immediately resign the situation which she had succeeded in obtaining, and they would all be reduced to poverty again. The injunction had been observed; neither of them knew more than that her occupation was carried on in London. Reid had applied to Clifford from hearing accidentally, through one of his city acquaintances, of his reputation for an almost eccentric benevolence. In the reply which, as may be remembered, Hilda had written, she had not sufficiently disguised her hand. Her father detected it, and surmised that her engagement must be with Clifford, and excused himself for breaking his promise and trying to find out how the matter stood, on the plea that he was not seeking her but the philanthropist.

"So you have dropped on your feet, Hilda," said her brother, as he rowed her up the river on the evening of the day on which the discovery had been made.

Hilda started. Her father had promised not to tell Harry anything about it. "What do you mean?" she replied uneasily, not knowing how much of the secret her father had let out. The two had been smoking together in the garden after dinner, while Hilda was up-stairs; that was for only a few minutes, but there would have been time for a disclosure.

"Oh, you need not be afraid of the governor blabbing," replied Harry; "he was as close as wax. He didn't tell me anything worth knowing. I'm never to be trusted with anything, of course." This was said with a sulky air, as if he felt aggrieved. Presently he added, "But I thought you were working for some company, and it turns out that it is not a company, but a rich swell, and a young one, too."

"Papa had no business to say anything about it," said Hilda; while something in the young man's tone called up a blush to her face. "It is no matter who my employer is, so long as I do my duty, and you have a roof over your head. So I desire you will say no more about it."

"I wish some rich swell would take a fancy to me, I know," rejoined Harry, "and give me a berth of some sort; I am tired of doing nothing, I can tell you." And the young man tugged at the sculls jerkily, as if to express his impatience.

"I am glad to hear you say that, Harry; I am sure you would be much happier if you were working for your livelihood. You would enjoy the river all the more of an evening, if you were busy in the day, besides——"

"Besides the satisfaction of not sponging on you? Out with it, Hilda; that's what you meant, I know. I don't want to be told about it, I assure you. I know that I am a burden to you, and all that, but what is a fellow to do?"

"We may hear of an opening for you soon, perhaps," said his sister, gently, pleased to find him in this conscientious mood.

"Opening! What opening is there likely to be, unless I go and enlist? And though I daresay you are tired of me, I don't suppose you want the son of an officer to enter the service as a full private."

"But you need not remain always a private; you might rise if you were steady," began Hilda, whose notions of military life, taken from what she had seen of foreign armies, did not make the idea of starting from that point appear unreasonable.

"So you would like me to shoulder a rifle in the ranks!" he interrupted. "Well, I must say, I thought you cared for me a bit more than that: I thought you had a little more pride about you than to want to see your brother shouldering a musket in the ranks."

"I don't want it at all, and you know that; but any honest occupation is better than doing nothing. It is working you harm, Harry, to be leading this useless life: you are not fair to yourself," she added; "you are fit for better things." Hilda perhaps hardly knew how much more she was saying than she really felt; but he was her brother, and there never yet was a man ready to go to the bad, that some female relation was not ready to find excuses for his faults.

"Honest occupation!" repeated the youth, somewhat mollified; "I wish I could find some honest occupation, as you call it, but I don't see that I am a bit nearer it than I was six months ago. I know I was a fool to lose my place, but I was never cut out for the clerking line. Active work is what I want. Give me something really fit for a man to do, and you will see if I can't do it." And for the moment he believed in what he said, and so did his sister. To be too idle and worthless for indoor work is often held to establish a proof of your fitness for active labour.

"I'll tell you what it is, Hilda," he said presently, resting on his sculls, "I ought to go out to the colonies. I should do well in the colonies,—I know I should. I am

just the man for the colonies,—I know I am. I'll tell you what, Hilda," he continued, again stopping his work of sculling, and leaning forward to look her in the face with an expression half eager, half of shame,—“don't you think you could screw up a loan of a hundred pounds to get rid of me? I should be able to pay you back, you know, and that would be far better than living upon you as I am doing now.”

“A hundred pounds, Harry! How can you think it possible for me to get such a sum?”

“Why, you always seem to have plenty of money now. It all comes out of your pocket, I know, although the governor pretends to contribute. You can manage to pay for Arthur's schooling.”

“Ah, but that is necessary, Harry,” she replied, gently; “the poor child must go to school, you know.”

“I don't see the necessity. I never went to school,—at least, not a swell boarding-school.”

“Not a swell boarding-school, Harry, at all. I am afraid it is not much of a place, although it does cost a great deal; but Arthur is better away from home.”

“Out of my way, you mean. Thank you for the compliment, Hilda. All the same, I don't see why everything is to be done for one brother and nothing for the other.”

“Harry! Harry! How can you speak like that? I am sure Arthur had hardly even clothes to his back, or even a toy to his name. Do you remember the old box he used to play with, pretending it was a cart and horse, poor little fellow? You have your boat. But perhaps in time,” she continued, “I might be able to manage to scrape up your passage money. Only we must be very, very economical, all of us.”

“Don't you think your swell friend might be got to stump up

something?” He said this lightly, but casting a shamefaced yet eager look at her, to see how she would take it.

“Harry, do spare me!” she cried; “I have gone through enough already. What will Mr——what will he think of us all if both you and papa go to him as beggars, asking him for money?”

“So the governor has been trying to work him already, has he? Precious sly the governor is; but I ought to have guessed it.”

“Be silent, Harry,” she cried, angrily; “I won't have a word more of this. There has been enough of disgrace already.”

The young man desisted, and they came home in silence. After Harry had made fast the boat to the landing-place, and as he overtook his sister on the way back to the cottage, he said, with an affectation of indifference, “You haven't told us the name of your swell friend, Hilda.”

Hilda hurried her pace without answering.

“I don't see why you should make such a mystery about it,” he added, after a pause, “if it's nothing to be ashamed of. But I can easily find out from the governor, you know, if I choose to set about it. Perhaps this swell friend wants looking after, that you keep the thing so close.”

“Oh, Harry,” cried his sister, stopping short and wringing her hands in her distress, “I think you and papa between you will drive me wild. Why do you taunt me in this cruel way, and spy out my steps?”

“Don't say it's me who spies out your steps,” he replied, with an air as of being injured. “I have never followed you about once; I told you I wouldn't do so, and I have kept my promise. It was all the governor's doing. I should

never have asked any questions if he had not begun about it."

"But why do you make such wicked insinuations?—you, a brother, of all people."

"Come, Hilda, I didn't mean anything; don't make a fuss about nothing,"—and Harry put his arm round his sister's waist, and spoke coaxingly.

"Oh Harry," the poor girl said, wiping her tears away, "you must not try me too much. Sometimes I feel as if I could scarcely bear myself,—as if I must run away and hide myself somewhere."

Then Harry caressed his sister and spoke coaxingly, and by this unusual manifestation succeeded in tranquillising her before they reached home.

"So you have come home at last," said Captain Reid, appearing on the steps as they arrived at the door. "I was wondering what had become of you. It is long past supper-time. Not that I have been idle," he added, with a smile of importance; "I have had plenty to do while you two have been amusing yourselves."

CHAPTER XVI.

The next morning, when Clifford and Hilda met, each was possessed by a feeling of expectation as to what the other might say about the new aspect of their relations produced by the discovery of the previous day. Yet neither at first referred to the subject; and indeed their manner outwardly displayed no sign of the mental excitement of which each of them was conscious. When Simmonds brought Hilda's luncheon into the room, the two were sitting at work over the draft rules for the new club-house, as if nothing unusual had happened. Clifford got up and stood before the empty fireplace, while Hilda cleared one end of the table to make space for the tray, and then, sitting down again, resumed her corrections to his dictation.

"Rule III. doesn't read well," observed Clifford. "'Every member who shall, after first admission, omit to pay;' better say, 'Every member who, after first admission, shall omit to pay.' You are so fond of breaking up your verbs, and sending your particles hunting after each other all through the sentence.

Now then, Simmonds, you have disarranged our papers quite enough; you have lots of room for the tray without doing more mischief. Have you altered that? (to Hilda.) Well, then, Rule V. is clumsy—'Each contributor shall be credited with the amount of his own deposit.' Is it likely that he would be credited with the deposit of anybody else? Say, 'The deposit of each contributor shall be credited to him,' and so on; why, Simmonds would draft better than that."

"I beg your pardon, sir," replied the person named, who had just entered the room a second time, bearing the dish of vegetables,— "what did you say?"

"I was merely giving a specimen of Miss Reid's elegant English. But here is Miss Reid's elegant luncheon; I will leave her to eat it in peace. What has Simmonds given you, I wonder? Bless me," he continued, lifting one of the covers, "does Miss Reid eat four potatoes? At the club they allow only two. Well, let me know as soon as you are ready to go on again,"—and he went off to his own room. And shortly afterwards,

when Miss Reid, knocking at his door, brought in a letter for him to sign, just as Simmonds entered with the cup of chocolate which he had ordered in lieu of luncheon, Clifford, who was writing in an easy-chair with his paper on his knee, said, "Thanks; just put it down on the table, will you:" and the secretary placed it there as she was bid, and left the room.

Such being the ways of the establishment, Simmonds had long ceased to look on the employment of a female secretary as at all more peculiar than the employment of a female housekeeper or a female servant. But later in the afternoon, just before it was time for the secretary to leave, Clifford came again into her room with a letter in his hand.

"Hilda," he said, and there was some hesitation in his voice—"what is this business which your father wants to embark in?"

"Ah!" exclaimed Hilda, turning pale and red by turns. "Then he *has* written to you again? I was afraid he would." And as Hilda looked at the letter which Clifford held in his hand, and then at him, she could discern that he recognised it as being from the writer of the former begging-letter, which she had taken from him and answered herself.

"Yes," said Clifford, understanding what was implied by her remark; "but the case is different now. If I could help an old officer in distress to make a fresh start in life, and achieve an honourable independence" (he was quoting from the letter in his hand), "why," he added, laughing, "I might cut the amount out of your salary, so there would be no question of generosity, nor much obligation."

"You are always good and kind," replied Hilda, smiling in spite of her distress; "but I am afraid my

father is too sanguine. Pray, sir," she continued, earnestly, "do not think anything more about it; you would be only throwing away your money. He ought never to have ventured to apply to you."

Clifford remained silent a while, till he could be quite sure that he understood what was implied in her words; then feeling satisfied that her reticence arose from her desire to avoid passing censure on her father, he replied—

"Very good, Hilda; I will undertake to put a stop to this, and you need not say that I have spoken to you about it at all. But now about your brother. I have seen him too, you know; is there anything to be done for him? I have a notion that he is on your hands too."

Hilda shook her head. "Poor Harry! he never has had a fair chance: he might have been different."

"Might he not get along in the colonies if he had a lift?"

Hilda started. "Has he been writing to you too?"

Clifford laughed. "No," he answered; "you do him an injustice. But it is generally considered that the best thing to do with sons who can't find employment at home, is to ship them off to the colonies. Well, we will talk about that some other time. I don't suppose he would feel the parting very much?"

"Young men naturally like to go out into the world."

"I see," said Clifford, "an affectionate boy, but with the aspirations natural to his age. But your father, Hilda, how would he be able to take being left alone? I don't mean," he added, after a little hesitation, "in the sense of your brother going away, but if *you* were to leave him. Young women also find a home of their own sometimes, you know."

"My father is quite dependent on me for a home. He has been unfortunate, and has lost everything."

"I don't mean of course that he should not be provided for. I was looking at the moral and not the material aspect of the case. I take it he would manage to get on very well without you."

Clifford spoke at random, but she replied apologetically, "You forget that my father has not been accustomed to have me with him. Till quite lately I have been a stranger to my own family."

"Ah, that explains everything." Clifford meant of course that it explained how she should be so different from the people she was living with.

Then Hilda told him, more by hints than in a direct account, something of her story, as it has been already told to the reader, Clifford listening eagerly to the revelation, which he found intensely interesting, although he made no comments.

"Well," he said, as he was leaving the room, "I will write to your father in a way to stop further applications without causing you trouble; and we will talk about what can be done for your brother another day."

"Mr Clifford, you are too good," was all poor Hilda could say.

"What is the use of being too good?" said Clifford to himself, as he returned to his own room. "She is grateful, no doubt, but I daresay she thinks me a prig and a noodle. Perhaps if I were like her own barber's block of a brother, she would be ready enough to fall in love with me; but for sandy hair and a sallow face there is nothing better forthcoming than gratitude. She calls me good. Good, forsooth! How well the thing would read if told as a story. He sends away the

brother, it would run, her natural protector, and buys off the father—that old gentleman is to be bought off, or I am very much mistaken—and then, when she is alone and defenceless, he accomplishes his purpose. That would be a pretty account of me. Cynics, on the other hand, might say,—Here is a designing girl who violates all the proprieties of life in order to throw herself at a man who is too much of a milksop to take what is offered. So I might have said myself if I did not know Hilda, and how good, and pure, and honest she is. Why am I not allowed to marry her? And yet where would be the happiness of gaining her hand without her heart? If ever she should give herself to me, it will be from a sense of duty—from gratitude, but not from love, and what I want is to be loved. I hunger after love—love to be given for its own sake. I cannot find the way to Hilda's heart, I fear, and Blanche has no heart to give. Blanche indeed! It is three days since I have seen her, and if I were to stay away for a week I doubt if she would give my absence a thought."

The course of Clifford's own thoughts and feelings had been turning rapidly of late, and this revelation of Hilda's past life, brushing away the suspicions he had been disposed to harbour regarding her motives for reserve, showing him the true reasons for her conduct—reasons which he now saw were based on delicacy and consideration for himself, and explaining the strange contrast between her natural refinement and her present circumstances—had wrought a sudden change in himself. The feeling of tender interest, mingled with curiosity, with which he had hitherto been regarding her, was now giving place to a more engrossing sentiment. His mental

attitude towards his cousin of simulated love and calculated courtship, seemed for the moment intolerably irksome; and feeling in his present frame of mind quite unequal to meet her on the old footing, he sent a note to his aunt to excuse himself from keeping an engagement he had made to dine in Charles Street that evening, and started off to pay a short visit to his trustee, in response to an invitation which he had received that morning.

Mr Bryant, the trustee in question, who had been an old friend of Clifford's uncle, lived with his wife and three daughters at Sunningdale, where Clifford was always a welcome guest. The girls were all nice; and as their father had been careful to let them understand that Clifford was as good as engaged already, because bound to marry his cousin, his relations with the young ladies had always been free from the restraint which might have arisen if he had been merely a rich young man, free to make his own choice of a wife. But for his diffidence Clifford would probably have been a more frequent visitor, as he was always received cordially, and treated with unaffected kindness as one of the family. His intimacy with the Misses Bryant had in fact played an important part in his social education, preserving him from the *gaucherie* which in his solitary life he might otherwise have contracted; while the effect discernible in their well-ordered household of the influence of feminine refinement, may have served to form his ideal of domestic happiness.

On the present occasion, Mr Bryant had asked him to come down for a short visit, being desirous of learning how matters stood between his ward and the family in Charles Street. No convenient

opportunity offered, however, for putting the question, for there were other visitors in the house; and Clifford, who, in his present state of mind, shrank from the cross-examination which he expected his trustee to be intending to make, avoided the chance of being alone with him, and beyond certain allusions on the part of the young ladies, nothing was said at first on the subject. "Mamma and I went up the other day to call on the Scallans again," said the eldest Miss Bryant to him, during a pause in a game at lawn-tennis, "but again they were not at home. And mamma wrote and asked them to come down and stay for a day or two, but they said they are so full of engagements they can't manage it. We hear, however, that Miss Scallan is quite the beauty of the season," and his fair inquirer shot a look at him to see how he would take the remark. Mrs Bryant, too, when they were in the drawing-room on the first evening, observed that they had hoped to be able to ask him to meet Mrs and Miss Scallan, but of course it was hardly to be expected that people would come all the way from town to stay with them, living so quietly as they did. Mrs Bryant said this with a warlike sniff, as implying that she resented the way in which his aunt and cousin had rejected her proffered attentions; and Clifford thought, with a sense of relief, that he should now probably escape the danger of meeting them at his trustee's house. It was not till just as he was leaving the house on the second morning of his visit that Mr Bryant himself said anything directly about the matter, asking Clifford to step into his room after the latter had taken leave of the ladies. "I haven't asked you how matters are going between you and your cousin," he

said, shutting the door so that the servant in the hall might not hear, "but I suppose you will have a definite announcement to make very shortly. The other parties ran it so close that I began to think they were going to cry off. There were barely six months left. I said to myself, Scallan wants to set the two young people free; he doesn't want the money—he is said to be rolling in wealth, you know; so, I said to myself, he is going to let Clifford keep the estate, and leave his daughter free to marry where she likes. But here they are, you see, acting strictly in accordance with the will, giving you your six months to make the young lady's better acquaintance; so I hope you are making play, my boy, and that you find her all you wish. I have not myself seen your cousin yet. I go to town very seldom now, you know, and your aunt does not seem to want to be particularly friendly with us; in fact, between

ourselves, Mrs Bryant is a little hurt about it. But I am told Blanche has grown into a lovely young woman. She always promised to be a beauty, even when she was quite a young girl. It is five years since I saw her last, you know, and very anxious years they have been, I can tell you. It is no joke being a trustee under such ticklish conditions, I can assure you; and if your uncle had not been such an old friend, and you had not been such a steady trustworthy fellow, I don't think I could have continued to act, especially as my co-trustee lives so far away, and leaves all the burden on my shoulders. However, there are only a very few months more, and then the business will be off my hands. But here is the carriage at the door, and you have not too much time to catch the train." And Clifford, hurrying off, lost the opportunity of unburdening himself of his secret, and confiding his doubts and difficulties to his old friend.

CHAPTER XVII.

The next day following that on which Hilda had the explanation with Clifford, described in the last chapter, when she arrived at the Mansions, she found a telegram from him awaiting her, to say that he should not return home that day,—that there was nothing for her to do, and that she had better take a holiday. He would have stopped her coming to town had he known her address. A holiday was just what she wanted. She would go down to Slaye, and see her little brother. Arthur had now been about six weeks at school. The child had never written; and although she had received a few lines from the master to say that he was well and happy, she yearned

ed for a sight of the little fellow's face. Parting with him had been a sore trial, and the recollection of the poor child's bitter sobs on the day when his father took him to school was still fresh. The little cottage at Rainham had not been an unhappy home for Arthur. Although shabbily clad, there had always been enough for him to eat, even at the worst times; and the idle, fashionless ways of the house were pleasant enough in the child's eyes. When the family were out, the good-natured maid-of-all-work, who composed the domestic establishment of the little household, would always let the child be with her while she made the beds and "did" the rooms; and he might

afterwards descend with her to the kitchen to take his small share in the preparation for the family meal. Then his father would send him out into the village with notes to the tradespeople, and often give him a penny to buy himself a bun on the way. Then when Hilda came home in the evening all was sunshine, although she had to teach as well as to play with him. Nominally Captain Reid undertook his little boy's education, but in reality the duty devolved on Hilda. And after tea the books would be brought out, the lesson said, and the copy written, and if there was time his sister would play a game of draughts with him; or his father, who was fond of cards, would bring out an old pack, and explain to him the mysteries of casino and cribbage till bed-time. Then, as the days grew longer, his father would take him out fishing, and he bought him a little rod and line with which Arthur pretended to be fishing too. Better still, the child would sometimes accompany Hilda when Harry rowed her in his boat after tea, and then come back long after his proper bed-time, and be allowed to sit up to supper. Except when Harry teased him, as he would do sometimes, or when his father came home cross from unsuccessful financial negotiations in the city, there could hardly be a happier little boy than Arthur; he had enough of simple pleasures, and could not miss the things of which he knew nothing; and, poor child, he did not dread going to school so much as he might have done if he had known what school meant. With him the pain consisted in what he was leaving, not in what he was going to: when on the announcement being made to him he burst out crying, and his father said, by way of consolation, that he would

enjoy having other boys to play with, the vision did not convey any particular picture to little Arthur, who had never had any playfellows.

"You needn't blubber about it, young shaver," said his brother, on the morning of his departure for school; "you have better luck than I had, more's the pity;" for Master Harry took care that his father's neglect should be debited with the proper share of his own shortcomings. But even Harry was ready with his parting contribution, which took the form of a small bat, his sister having given the elder brother some pocket-money the day before; while Martha the servant had made him a cake, a heavy affair in truth—for maids-of-all-work are not often good confectioners—but still of goodly size, and which, wrapped up in an old newspaper, was deposited with his little box of clothes on the back seat of the cab. Arthur tore himself away from Hilda at last, and drove off with his father. The distance was not great, but the school lay on a different line of railway, and the Captain did not get back till late in the afternoon. He gave a flourishing account of the school, and said that he had spoken with Arthur's bed companion (the school was of a humble kind, as befitted Hilda's means, and separate beds were not stipulated for in the prospectus), who had promised to be kind to him; and Mrs Brake, the master's wife, had been very pleased at having the son of a military officer at the school,—“a distinguished military officer, she called me,” said the Captain, with a little smirk, for it did not often fall to him to receive compliments of any sort. He had left Arthur, too, in better spirits. In truth, the poor child had cried himself out, and received the Captain's parting valedictions with a sort of

indifference arising from exhaustion.

"Everybody requires some capital to start in life with, Arthur, my boy," said the Captain, as he came away, "and the only capital you will have is a good education. So be sure you make the most of it." The child did not understand what he meant, but promised to be a good boy.

The difficulty of getting from Rainham to Slaye in the few leisure hours available had hitherto prevented Hilda from going to see her brother; and indeed her father had been disposed to throw difficulties in the way, saying that it was better the boy should be left to himself to shake down into school life. And although a little stock of writing-paper and envelopes had been included among the simple toys and other home treasures packed in his box, the child was probably too young to set about writing home of himself; so that although some weeks had passed, the only tidings of him had been his "mid-term school report," which gave his conduct as good, and said that his progress in English literature, mathematics, French, and Latin, was fair, but that he was backward in composition and divinity. The curriculum of studies at the Slaye Academy, the Captain observed, was very extensive, which was one reason why he had pitched on that school for Arthur. There was no saying what might not prove useful in after life for a boy who had to make his way in the world without capital.

Here, then, was the opportunity Hilda had been longing for. Accordingly, after writing some letters which had remained unanswered the previous day, she started from the Alexandra Mansions after an early luncheon, and getting down to Slaye about three o'clock, set off

to walk to the school, which was in the outskirts of the town. The place was easily made out by the large brass plate, "Slaye Commercial and Collegiate Academy," affixed to the gate of the little garden facing the road. The house looked to be small for such a purpose, but on the other side of the courtyard, at the back of it, there abutted a barn-like building, which was in fact the schoolhouse. Hilda walked up the garden to the door of the house. The bell was answered by a slatternly maid, and on her asking to see Master Reid, she was shown into a dingy parlour, and the servant went off to summon "Little Reid," who, she said, was in school. Presently the door opened, and Arthur looked in timidly, and then seeing who was there, ran up to his sister, and throwing his arms round her, as she sat on a low chair, sobbed as if his heart would break. Hilda had hardly succeeded in quieting him, with difficulty maintaining her own composure, when the master's wife entered,—an untidy little woman, with bright ribbons in her cap, and an overworked appearance. Her manner to Hilda was extremely civil, not to say obsequious, as she inquired after the Captain her father; while she called Arthur a dear little fellow, and patted him on the head with so much effusion as for the moment to mislead Hilda, who did not reflect that a woman who has thirty boys to look after, besides a large family of her own, can hardly find time to bestow much affection on any one in particular. In fact, the boys saw very little of Mrs Brake, who was generally occupied with the cares of her numerous young children: the boys were left for the most part to Mr Brake and the slatternly servant. While answering the lady's inquiries after the health of the Cap-

tin, Hilda had time to notice the change in Arthur. When at home, although shabbily dressed, he was always kept neat and clean; now, although not looking exactly ill, he was dirty as well as shabby. To her inquiries whether she could see Mr Brake, his wife explained that he was now in school; but soon afterwards that gentleman, who had heard that a lady had come to see Reid, also made his appearance. As he came forward to greet her, Hilda could feel Arthur's little hand tighten its hold on hers. Hilda had had no experience of English middle-class schoolmasters; the idea of a teacher was associated in her mind with the possession of university diplomas and Government certificates, and she felt a little awe of Mr Brake, a tall, dark man, with a scowl on his face, dressed in a suit of rusty black, although she saw at once that while trying to appear gracious to Arthur's sister, he was evidently not at his ease in the company of a lady. But presently plucking up courage, she asked to see the school and the boys' rooms, and Mr Brake accordingly led the way across the yard, one corner of which was fitted up with some rough gymnastic apparatus, to the schoolroom. It was a long low room on the upper floor of the barn-like building, and on this warm summer afternoon had a sickening feeling of stuffiness; and the boys, of whom there were between forty and fifty on the crowded forms, of from eight to eighteen years old, looked hot and stupid. The usher, who occupied a raised seat near the door, looked hot also and cross, and Hilda understood why Mr Brake should look the same. There was a buzz in the room as they went up the dirty staircase, which ceased as Mr Brake appeared in the doorway. The boys all turned round in their seats

to look at the party, but with uneasy glances, as if they might be called to account: the master evidently had his school in hand. Hilda asked to have Arthur's class pointed out; the bench indicated was so full, it seemed as if room could not be found on it for even one more little fellow.

On their way out they looked in at the dining-room on the ground floor, also pervaded with a smell of its own, as of sour tea. Here Mr Brake returned to his labours upstairs, and Mrs Brake took Hilda over the bed-rooms, which were in the main building. Three rooms held twenty beds, and the twenty beds held at night two-and-thirty boys,—the smaller boys, it was explained, sharing each his bed with a companion.

Then Hilda asked to be allowed to take her brother out for a walk, which was at once agreed to, Mrs Brake patting Arthur on the head, and saying she hoped the dear little fellow would enjoy the treat; and the two set off together, Arthur still clutching his sister's hand.

The country round was flat and uninteresting, but a shady lane was found not far off, and out of this they made their way into a field. There they sat down on a bank under a tree.

"How nice it is to see you again, Arthur, dear, and how lucky that I have had such a fine afternoon for my holiday!"

The child, in answer, threw himself on his sister's breast, and began again to sob as if his little heart would break. It was long before she could succeed in getting him to be sufficiently composed to talk to her; but even then she could not find out at once what was the cause of his distress. It is easier at that age to suffer than to explain. Many a child has gone through the same trial, and there are few trials in life

harder than that encountered by a little boy when first sent to a rough school. The child had no particular complaint to make. Mr Brake was kind, when he hadn't got a headache; and Mrs Brake was kind sometimes, but he didn't often see her; and Mr Lucy—that was the usher—was kind when he was in a good temper; and Susan the boys' maid was kind, when she wasn't in a hurry. And the boys were kind, some of them. Bowler was very kind, but Smith Major sometimes bullied. And Tubbs, who shared his bed, was kind, but he pinched him sometimes. And it was Tomkins who tied the string on to his toe at night, and began the tossing in a blanket. These revelations were extracted only by degrees, the child being unable apparently to divest himself of fear, lest, if he did not give everybody a good character, it would be brought home to him in some way afterwards with formidable consequences.

Then Hilda inquired about the domestic arrangements. There was apparently a scramble for the limited number of basins in the morning, and the little boys came off worst; but there were warm footpans once a-week for the big boys, and Susan—that was the maid—washed all the little boys once a-week also. Susan was very kind when she was not in a hurry.

Susan might look after your hands as well as your faces, thought Hilda, as she looked at her brother's grimy little fingers. "But what has happened to your hands, Arthur?" she exclaimed; "have you met with an accident?" For as she turned them round she saw that the palms were all discoloured, with blisters running across them in stripes.

Arthur looked ashamed. That was the caning he had last week,

he explained, with some hesitation; for the offence had been made so much of that even his sister would be shocked. Mr Brake caned him because his copy-book was blotted; but it was Paine Minor who had spilt the ink. Yes, it hurt very much, and it hurt him still to do anything with his hands,—to play cricket, or to hold a ball. Possibly Mr Brake in his wrath had not caned harder than usual. Young Paine now, who was tough all over, and who could stop a cricket ball as well as the biggest fellow in the school, would not have felt the punishment five minutes after it was over; but little Arthur had thin delicate hands, like a girl's, and the caning to him had been torture, prolonged ever since. This view of the case, however, had not occurred to the child, in whom the sense of injustice was not yet developed. The caning inflicted, and the chances of more to follow, were merely so much additional to the horrors of school, to be silently endured. Nor, as he sat there on the bank in the shade, talking with his sister, answering her questions in his imperfect way,—for children can realise before they can describe,—did the possibility of an escape from his misery ever suggest itself to his mind. The other boys took school as a matter of course: many of them declared they liked school better than home; and although this may have been bravado, still, so far as the child could reason, the pain of his life was subjective, and not objective, and the misery must be accepted as a matter of course.

"But dear me, Arthur, darling," said his sister, looking at her watch, "it is past four, and I must catch the half-past five o'clock train; and you must be hungry dear; let us see if we can get something to eat,"—and they returned to the town. Arthur had never been into the

town, and so could not guide his sister; but they soon found a confectioner, who gave them tea: and although Arthur—feeling perhaps that he was bound to put on company manners for the occasion—declared at first that he was not hungry, he managed to eat a good meal of thin bread and butter and pastry, after which they made their way back to the school, bearing a large paper of buns and a big cake. As they neared the house, passing the lane which led up to the yard at the back, the door opening into the latter was open, and Arthur suggested that they should go in that way. The yard was full of boys playing or pushing each other about, waiting for the evening school bell to ring. Arthur pointed out Bowler, the kind boy, to his sister, also Smith Major, and Hilda, advancing towards the former, said, "I have to thank you very much, Master Bowler, for being so kind to my little brother." Master Bowler, a stout good-natured looking boy of sixteen or so, sniggered; he had never been spoken to by a lady before, and Hilda's coming among them had made a sensation in the school, although she was plainly dressed. The sisters and mothers of the other boys were not ladies. Bowler hardly understood that Hilda was offering him her hand, but at last he put forward loutishly a dirty fist, while the other boys had shrunk back a little so as to leave the two standing apart: some of them laughed, while some appeared awe-struck at the apparition of so much beauty.

Then came the inevitable moment when Hilda must tear herself away, and whispering to her brother to be a brave boy, and that the holidays would soon come, she hurried out by the door into the lane, leaving Arthur standing alone in the yard—his arms full of the

parcels of buns and cake, the tears rolling down his cheeks. But he was not left alone for long; a speedy distribution was made of the buns, the cake being reserved for a nocturnal banquet. But while some of the boys were disposed to resent his being so apparently well connected, and having been taken out for the afternoon,—the sentiment finding expression in sundry pushings about as the boys jostled their way into the schoolroom, with sly pulling of the hair, and Bowler was ever after called "Master" Bowler,—Arthur on the whole gained consideration from his sister's visit, as to which it would be hard to say whether the pleasure or the pain it gave him was the greater. There was pleasure, no doubt, in the sense of playing the host when the cake was distributed that night up in the bed-room, even Smith Major taking his share like the rest. Bowler had stopped the scramble which Smith Major wanted to begin. "It's little Reid's cake," said Bowler; "let little Reid divide it himself as he likes." And divided it was accordingly with a shoe-horn; and Arthur, sitting on the end of his bed—his and Tubbs's jointly—distributed the portions in turn to each fellow in the room, and for a while they were all very jovial and crummy. But then, when the joys of the repast were over, there came the reaction. The vision of his sister had swept away his scanty stock of resignation to the misery of his school life, to which he had been almost getting accustomed; the bitterness of the contrast between what his life had been at home and his present unhappiness at school, came back again as freshly as during the first terrible day endured there. By an effort he controlled himself so long as Tubbs was awake, for Tubbs always pinched him if he cried in bed;

but now Tozer, the story-teller to the company, stopped in the course of his yarn to know if any fellows were still awake, and receiving no

answer, composed himself to slumber. Then the poor child gave loose to his tears, till at last he too sobbed himself to sleep.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Hilda also, for her part, had been much affected, and seeing her little brother's unhappy state, had had much ado to keep from joining in his tears, and as she travelled home, bethought herself anxiously what could be done to soften the child's hard lot. She had never seen a boy's school before, and wondered whether all English schools were like this one. Her experience of schools had been limited to seeing the children in foreign towns going to and fro—boys and girls together—to the town school, their knapsacks on their backs, with well-washed faces and happy countenances. Were all English schools, she wondered, so rough and squalid, or was Mr Brake's exceptional in these respects? Her father had spoken well of it, but then, perhaps, he had not been very particular in his examination. She would talk the matter over with him in the evening. He was fond of Arthur in his way, and would be interested in what she had to say about him.

But when she got home and began to describe her visit, she found her father's attention pre-occupied; and an air of conscious self-importance betokened that he too had something to say. The Captain's mind was not capable of embracing more than one subject at a time, and Hilda saw from his inattentive manner that she must suffer him to disburthen himself of his tale before he could be brought to take an interest in Arthur's case. The Captain was soon drawn out, and, after a small show of mystery

and a little pressing, delivered himself easily of his story. He had had quite an adventure in the city. It was connected with a lady, a widow lady. He had come to the rescue of a lady, a widow lady, on his way to the city. It was in an omnibus. She had had her pocket picked by a woman sitting next her, a very ladylike-looking person, who got out in Fleet Street. The lady herself had got out at the Bank at the same time with the Captain, and then when she took out her purse to pay the conductor—or rather when she put her hand into her pocket for her purse—the purse was gone. She was going down to the Bank with her warrants to draw her dividends. It was a most singular thing.

"And were the warrants stolen too?" asked Hilda, who had a very indistinct notion what warrants might be.

"Happily she had sewn these up in the lining of her dress. It was really quite providential: not that the thief would have been able to make use of them, for they were not endorsed; but it gave the lady a great fright. And it was very fortunate that I was there, and able to pay her 'bus for her. She called me her preserver," continued the Captain, taking off his glass of porter with a simper; "she said she would have been lost without me."

"I accompanied her to the Bank," he continued, "for she was all of a tremble, and then I made her take some sherry and soup at a restaurant, for she was quite upset, and then we went on to the office of the

East India Railway, and she drew her dividends there. She seems to have a very comfortable income. And then I did a very good stroke of business for her." Here the Captain looked preternaturally business-like.

"What was that?" asked Hilda, her eager manner showing the alarm she felt at what might be coming.

But she was quickly reassured by her father's manner. He had not possessed himself of the dividends, nor even persuaded the lady to invest them in one of his bubble companies. "I found that she was in the habit of carrying all her money about with her, and keeping it locked up in a box under her bed. She had been told it was not safe to put it in a bank,—that banks were always liable to break. Women have such curious notions of business," he continued, with an air of superiority. And the remark was meant quite as much for a hit at Hilda as for the widow heroine of his adventure; for Hilda's old-fashioned notions of going through the town, purse in hand, and paying the monthly bills—a practice she had made him promise to observe, now that there was money to pay them with—the Captain was wont to denounce as unbusiness-like. "It would be much better to put the money in the bank and draw against it, Hilda," he used to say, "and then our credit would be established;" but Hilda had been firm on this point. "Women have such simple notions about money," he continued; "but I assured Mrs Baker that there was no danger in trusting a respectable bank, and I got her to come to the Middlesex and Surrey and pay in her dividends, and open an account then and there. They knew me, you know; for the 'Inevitable' Assurance Company"—this was a bubble company which had never got much

beyond advertising its prospectus—"used to bank with the Middlesex and Surrey when I was on the direction; so they opened the account at once. I might have had my commission, I suppose, if I had asked for it; many men, I know, would have made a point of asking for it, but," he added, with a lofty air, "I was above that. I was acting merely as a private friend, and would not allow business considerations to enter into the matter; and she was good enough to say that it was very disinterested of me. We opened the account at the Tottenham Court Road branch. We drove there in a cab, for she was really not fit to travel in a 'bus, after what she had gone through, and then we drove on to Fitzroy Square: she is staying there with her maid at a very respectable boarding-house." So it has been a very expensive day for me, Hilda, for of course I could not allow Mrs Baker to pay for the cab or the luncheon; but I feel that it was money well bestowed. Mrs Baker has begged me to go and see her again. She was left a widow a year ago. The late Mr Baker was a timber merchant at Hull. She has come up to town to be a little more cheerful, and is thinking of going on to Margate later in the season."

Here the Captain's flow of conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Harry, late for dinner as usual. He had been taking a walk, he said; and so he had in fact, to and from the village, where he had been playing billiards with some commercial travellers at the "Catherine Wheel." Harry, however, was in a complaisant mood, being in want of money, and was quite ready to listen to his sister's account of her visit to Arthur, the recollection of whose woe-begone face sat heavy on her heart. "Poor little beggar," he said, "they are

being rather rough on him. I'll tell you what, Hilda, I'll go down there to-morrow; they are sure to have a half holiday on a Saturday, and I'll take him out for the afternoon. That will set him up a bit, poor little chap."

That evening Harry insisted on taking his sister out for a row, although it was late, and she was tired; but the weather was fine and warm, and the exertion of walking down to the river accomplished, Hilda enjoyed the excursion, and, sitting silent in the stern, went over in the quiet leisure of the calm evening the scene of the day,—her interview with the master and his wife, little Arthur's sorrow, and all that had passed during her visit to the school. Harry, smoking his pipe and lazily plying his sculls, did not care to disturb her: he saw that she was in a pliant mood, which was just what suited him.

But after they left the boat, and were walking up to the cottage, he began—"I say, Hilda, I am rather short of cash."

"Why, Harry, I gave you ten shillings only the day before yesterday!"

"Well, yes," said Harry; "but then there was a bill owing for my boots being mended." Harry so far satisfied his conscience that he did not say outright the bill was paid, but merely left his sister to infer it if she chose.

Hilda took a half sovereign out of her purse and gave it him. "I wish you would be more careful of your money, Harry; you know we are really very poor still."

Harry looked at the half sovereign ruefully.

"You know it will cost something to go and see Arthur, if I go by rail; and I thought you would like me to buy him something when I am there, and to take him out and give him some tea, and that

sort of thing, and some grub to take back with him. But, of course, you have a right to do as you please. It's your money, not mine—I know that."

"I didn't understand that it was quite settled you were going to see Arthur to-morrow," said Hilda, taking out her purse again and producing another half sovereign. "Dear little fellow! Yes, I gave him a cake and some buns, but I daresay they won't last till to-morrow."

"You may take your oath of that," said Mr Harry, pocketing the money. "The little chap will be ready enough for another turn of his teeth; boys at that age are always ready to eat," he continued, as if unconscious of himself possessing an excellent appetite. "I say," he continued presently, "you are a dear, good girl, Hilda, and so clever, too. I wish I could make money like you do; perhaps I shall when I get out to Australia, and find something to suit me. But just now a fellow feels awfully hard up. I'll tell you what, Hilda; I think it would be much better if, instead of my having to ask you for a trifle now and then, like this, you were to advance me a fixed sum. A fellow has some pride, you know; and it isn't pleasant to be asking one's sister for a few paltry shillings, as if he were a little boy. It would only be an advance, you know, and we would keep a regular account of it in a book, and I would pay you back again by and by."

"I am afraid," replied his sister, after a pause, "that it might lead to extravagance. Suppose you spent all your allowance before the next was due? You *might* be tempted to spend it, you know, and there would be the same difficulty over again, and we should all be so much the poorer."

"Oh, no; you need not be afraid

of that. You think me extravagant, but a fellow at my age can't be expected to be careful over a few shillings at a time; but if I had a regular sum, coming in regularly, and had to pay for my own clothes out of it, you would see how careful I should be."

Hilda remained silent, thinking over the proposition. Would this plan, she asked herself, really help to make her brother more steady and considerate?

They were now drawing near the cottage. Harry made one more appeal. "Look here, Hilda," he said; "if you could manage to let me have five pounds, say, to-night, to make a start with, I wouldn't trouble you again for ever so long."

"To-night, Harry? why to-night? Surely we need not be in such a hurry as that."

"Why," said the young man, uneasily, "you are always so busy in the morning, there is no getting a word with you. There is nothing like making a good beginning at once."

"There is plenty of time in the mornings, if you would get up earlier, and come down to breakfast. But I have to pay the weekly bills to-morrow morning—I *must* do that first, and then I will see if we can begin this new arrangement." And Hilda, as she said this, reproached herself for not having thought of the plan before. Perhaps she had not been fair to her brother in doling out pocket-money to him in small sums irregularly. Were he treated with greater confidence, and trained to more regular habits, perhaps his sense of duty would be stronger.

They were now entering the house. As they went up the steps to the door, Harry laid his hand on his sister's arm to stop her. "I say, Hilda," he began, in a low voice husky with eagerness, "do think

again about what I asked you. I wouldn't bother you about it if I wasn't in earnest. Do; there's a good girl."

"Is it anything urgent that you want the money for?" she replied, struck by his manner.

"I have told you already," he replied, sulkily, and avoiding her look, "that I want to make a good beginning. I thought you would be glad to help me—to grow steady; you always profess a great deal in that line, although you are not so ready to practise it."

"I think I hardly deserve your reproaches," she replied, sadly. "But please, Harry, let me wait till to-morrow; we have got into the way of paying our bills weekly; I must not break through that rule on any account. But to-morrow morning we will work out a plan together. Surely a few hours cannot make so much difference, Harry?"

But the young man broke away from her angrily, and muttering something about it not being his fault if there were a blow up, passed on into the house.

The night was hot, and Hilda, who, although tired with the day's exercise, was sleeping uneasily, going again in her dreams over her visit to the school, awoke hearing the noise of some one moving in the house. It came from her brother's room, which was next to her own. He often came home after she had gone to bed, and at first she thought that the noise was made by him on returning, till recollecting that he had not gone out. And now he was not coming in; for the door of his room was opened, and she could hear him going stealthily down-stairs. In the stillness of the night every sound could be heard through the thin walls and rough joinery of the cheap

cottage, and she could hear him distinctly go into the parlour. She was dozing off, when again awakened by hearing a window opened, and then a footstep on the gravel path, followed by the sound of the little gate at the end opening on its rusty hinges. Hilda got up, and looking out of her open window, standing back so that she might not be seen, could distinctly make out her brother's figure, and could recognise his footstep as he walked up the road towards the village. He was gone, no doubt, to some haunt of dissipation. By this her maiden fancy could conjure up nothing worse than a carousal with some other idlers at the "Catherine Wheel," not knowing that this respectable inn was closed by law at eleven o'clock. A faint light in the north hardly sufficed to mark

the change from evening to morning twilight, but Vega, still high in the sky, showed that it was not much past midnight. Then as Hilda returned to her bed she thought she could understand why her brother had been so urgent for the money. Probably some debt of honour had to be met that very evening. She had heard a good deal from her father about debts of honour, without however understanding clearly in what the honourable element consisted. To her simple mind, every debt that could not be paid involved a loss of honour. And balancing her doubts whether she ought not to have given Harry the money against the dictates of economy which had been so painfully impressed upon her, the tired girl at last fell asleep.

CHAPTER XIX.

The hot morning sun was high in the heavens when Hilda was awoke by a cry from Martha, who had just gone down-stairs to the labours of the day. She jumped up, but before she could get ready to go and see what was the matter, her father, who on the maid's alarm had hurried out of his room in slippers and dressing-gown, came up to tell her that the house had been broken into in the night.

"A burglary, Hilda," cried the Captain, knocking at her door; "come down quickly." And Hilda joined him as quickly as she could, to find Martha crying and wringing her hands, and the Captain waiting for her descent to inquire into the matter—it did not seem to occur to him to do anything without Hilda, — surveying with blank amazement the aspect of the little room which had extorted Martha's cry on her first coming into

it. The window was wide open; the furniture had not been much disturbed, but on the ground was Hilda's despatch-box, broken open, and the contents scattered on the floor.

"Where is Harry?" asked Hilda.

"Ah, where is Harry?" said his father; "I must go and tell him of this." And the Captain ran up-stairs again, and began drumming at his son's door, well pleased at being the first to convey the news.

Master Harry was always a sound sleeper, but this morning he was sleeping sounder than usual, and the banging at his door went on with increasing violence, until at last a sleepy voice was heard from inside asking what all the row was about. To which his father replied by telling him to get up and come down quickly, for that there had been a burglary committed.

"A what?" replied the young

man, still apparently not fully awake.

"A burglary, Harry, I tell you. The house has been broken into, and Hilda's despatch-box broken to pieces. Come down quickly." Not till then did the young man get up.

"All right, governor," he said; "I will be with you in less than no time,"—and then the sound of a pair of heavy legs descending on the floor asserted itself throughout the cottage.

By the time Harry made his appearance, Hilda had retired to dress herself properly, the company in the drawing-room having now been augmented by the baker's man, who, passing in his cart, had been invited by Martha to come in—the occasion demanding that etiquette should be laid aside—as well as by a member of the county constabulary, who, making his rounds vigilantly in the bright sunshine, and attracted by the disturbance apparent in the little villa, had come in to contribute his professional criticism to the discussion.

"There has been a burglary committed on these premises," said this worthy, after carefully examining the broken writing-case inside and outside, as if expecting to find the robber's card and address hidden in it.

"La!" said Martha, listening to the words of wisdom with open mouth.

"A burglary," continued the policeman, "that's what it's been." And then going up to the window and looking out cautiously, as if the burglar might be hiding outside, he added, "He got in by the window, don't you see; you found it open, didn't you, Miss?"

"Right open, just as you see it now," replied the damsel addressed. "When I come in to do the room out, and saw the window wide open,

I said to myself, here's master been sitting up and gone to bed and left the winder open."

"You ought not to have said that, Martha," observed the Captain with dignity. "You ought to know that I am too careful to do such a thing."

"Which I know you are, sir," said Martha, "begging your pardon for thinking such a thing; which I only said it to myself. But I did think it just for the moment," she continued, under some vague impression that her words would be taken down as evidence.

"He's got in by the window," interrupted the policeman sententiously—"that's how he got in;" as if a chain of inductive reasoning had finally brought him to this conclusion.

"But how could he have opened the hasp, policeman?" objected Martha. "I'm certain I made it fast before I went to bed."

"Them chaps is so artful," replied the constable with a superior air; "they have ways of doing things you would never guess till you come to deal with them. And there's his footsteps on the flower-bed," he added; and getting out by the window himself, he proceeded to take the measure of them with his pocket-handkerchief. "New boots he had on, as you may see by the marks; he must have been one of the regular swell sort, I don't doubt. Now if I can find a pair of boots to fit them marks, we shall know the man as done it."

"La! policeman," said Martha with admiration, "well, that is clever, to be sure."

"Ah, we have to be clever in our trade, my dear," replied the constable; "we have clever ones to deal with, I can tell you. Yes," he continued, climbing back again into the room, "he was respectably dressed, there's no doubt of it. Why, sir," turning towards Harry,

"his boots might have been every bit as good as yours."

Harry on being thus addressed looked somewhat confused, and beat a speedy retreat to his room on plea of completing his toilet. Shortly afterwards the policeman, declining the Captain's hospitable offer of refreshment, went off to make his report at the station, and to prosecute further inquiries after the man wearing boots that would fit the measurements which he had taken off on his handkerchief.

Although breakfast was late that morning at the cottage, Hilda was still in her room when it was put on the table. She felt too much shocked to be able to face her brother, and wanted time to collect her thoughts. But presently from her window seeing him go out, she descended to the parlour.

Her father explained that Harry had gone off to the police-station to assist in the inquiry. He was so eager to help he had taken hardly any breakfast. Harry was a sharp fellow, he observed, when he had anything to do which interested him. So eight pounds had been stolen? How fortunate that Hilda had kept some money in her purse; and only think if the burglar had gone into his (the Captain's) room when he was asleep and taken his watch! It was really quite providential, for his door was not locked. And Hilda's jewels too? Suppose he had gone into her room and carried them off, or even worse! He remembered when he was a boy how a lady was murdered by a burglar who had got into her bedroom. He was carrying off her jewels when the lady awoke and tried to stop him, and in the struggle the poor lady was killed. The man was hung at York. The Captain remembered the case as if

it were yesterday; he was at school at Portsmouth at the time.

Hilda shuddered as her father havered on. Fortunately she had never shown her trinkets—of which she had still a few remaining—to her brother, or of what might not the wretched young man have been capable? Ah, he must have been in desperate straits for the money. If she had only given it to him last night, this dreadful crime would never have been committed. She felt too wretched and sick at heart to speak.

The Captain prattled on. What would Mr Clifford say when he heard of it? he presently observed.

"Mr Clifford!" said Hilda, surprised out of her self-absorption; "why should Mr Clifford know anything about it?"

"Don't you mean to tell him?" asked her father; "he would be greatly interested, I am sure. And perhaps, as it was part of your salary which has been stolen, he might think it"—but an exclamation of disgust, which even the Captain could not help seeing, prevented him from completing the sentence. And after looking rather silly, he added, "Mrs Baker will, I am sure, be very much interested in the affair; she said she was fond of excitement, and always read the police reports." And then in answer to his daughter's look of inquiry as to what Mrs Baker would have to do with it, he continued; "I am thinking of going to town to call on Mrs Baker this morning, you know; it seems only proper to inquire how she is, after all that happened yesterday. I think she would be gratified by the attention; in fact," he added, with a smirk, "she was good enough to say that she quite counted on my coming to-day."

CHAPTER XX.

Captain Reid accordingly went up to town by the same train with his daughter. They were rather late in starting, and had to walk fast, going round, too, by the police-station, where the Captain wanted to inquire if the burglar had been captured. The day was hot, and Hilda felt as if she could hardly drag herself along. The rest in the train revived her, but she looked so pale when they got out that even her father noticed it, and politely proposed that she should take a cab, even offering to go with her as far as the Alexandra Mansions, although it would be out of his way. But Hilda, accustomed to make a virtue of the practice of small economies, declared that she was quite able to walk, and set out accordingly. Clifford, it so happened, returning from his visit to Sunningdale, had driven up to the door of the Alexandra Mansions just as she arrived there, and they went up-stairs together. His flat was on the second floor, and the lofty staircase seemed to wearied Hilda a greater climb than ever. Clifford noticed her paleness and the unusual languor of her movements, and opening the door with his latch-key, and depositing his hand-bag on the floor of the hall, followed her into her room; and then making her sit down while he stood before her, said, with an air of concern, "What has happened to you this morning?"

Hilda smiled. Somehow in his presence the weight seemed lifted off her heart. "I think the heat has upset me a little," she answered.

"You walked here, I suppose? That was not proper form for a business-like secretary," he said, playfully, "to be wasting your time and my own, instead of taking a cab on a hot morning like

this, and charging it in a contingent bill. But it is not all the weather. Something unpleasant has happened, I can see."

What could poor Hilda say? To tell him of the supposed burglary would be to add to the deception, and might bring him still more in contact with her family,—a thing she would fain spare him and herself. "I think I over-fatigued myself yesterday," she said. "I took advantage of my holiday to go and see my little brother at his school at Slaye."

"Your little brother? So there is another brother, is there? You never told me about this. Well, was there anything the matter with him that you look so sadly about it?"

Then Hilda by degrees was got to tell her story, the tears in her eyes as she described the child's unhappiness, for she was ill and unnerved; while Clifford drew her out, asking questions when she stopped in her tale, without making any comment, till she had quite unburdened herself of this part of her secret troubles.

"Schools of this class are all of them pretty rough, I take it," he said at last; "and the little fellow is full young to go to such a school for the first time. But I suspect, from what you say, the master is more of a Tartar than most; the poor little fellow is in awe of both boys and master, which is a bad combination. But you are not bound to keep him at that particular school, you know. We must look out and find a better."

"You are too kind, sir," said Hilda, rising. "But now had I not better begin my day's work? There was nothing done yesterday, you know."

"Sir, again! What did I tell you the other day, Hilda? never to use that word again."

"I can't help using it sometimes, when I feel so grateful to my master——"

"'Grateful' and 'master,' Hilda! Is this always——"

But before he could finish his sentence, Hilda, growing suddenly paler, tottered forward, and would have fallen if he had not caught her in his arms.

He drew her to the couch, and then, calling for help, Simmonds came running in, to find him bending over Hilda's senseless form.

"Bless me!" cried Simmonds, "she is all in a faint."

"A faint! is that all?" said Clifford, who, never having seen a young lady in a fainting-fit before, had been thoroughly alarmed, and now, greatly relieved by his housekeeper's diagnosis, ran to get some wine from his room, while Simmonds and Jane, who also had arrived on the scene of action, removed Hilda's hat and scarf, and began to loosen her dress.

"She is coming to, sir," said Simmonds, meeting him at the door as he returned with the wine. "Better to leave her to Jane and me for a bit; she will be all right again by-and-by."

And Clifford returned to his own room to await Simmonds's further report, the subsiding anxiety succeeded by a feeling of ecstasy at having had that sweet burden in his arms. "I have played this farce too long," he thought, as he paced his room uneasily. "She is wearing herself out. I have been working her like a man all this time. And she is, after all, only a delicate woman, tender and gentle beyond most women. The shock of seeing her little brother unhappy has been too much for her." And then, his mood changing, he repeated

bitterly, "'grateful!' and 'master!'" This is how she looks at it still. What a milksop I must be to have concealed my feelings so long."

Simmonds soon brought a favourable report. Miss Reid was better, but was still lying down, and hoped he would excuse her not setting to work for a bit. "I told her not to worry herself about work," added the housekeeper, "but I was to be sure and say this."

"Work! she shall never do any work again if she does not keep quiet to-day, at any rate. Be sure and say that in reply. But now about arranging for her stay here. She must not be allowed to go home this evening, Simmonds, that is quite clear. She will get no rest or care at home," he continued, as Simmonds seemed to receive this proposal doubtfully; "there is no one but her father and brother at home, and what she wants is some kind and clever woman like you to treat her case properly. Look here, Simmonds. I am going away for to-night. I am going down for a pull on the river; you can get my room ready for her while I am away."

But Simmonds, who now viewed the notion of Miss Reid's staying more favourably, said there was no need to disturb the master's room; she would make up a bed for Miss Reid on the couch, and put it in the dressing-room, and she and Jane would lend her what was necessary for the night.

"Do so, and you shall telegraph to her father to say she is not going home. And now pack my bag as soon as you can. But first tell me, Simmonds, is your former mistress, Miss Pasco, still keeping that school at Richmond?"

"Yes, sir, and doing very well, I believe. She takes twenty-four little boys, and is like a mother to them all. I was down to see her in the autumn, you know, sir, and

a very nice place she has got,—play-ground and garden and all, and two nice young ladies to help her, and the little fellows as happy as happy can be."

"And do the nice young ladies do all the teaching?"

"Not all, sir. Miss Palmer takes English and history and suchlike, and Miss Playfair,—that's the younger one,—she teaches French and music; and then there's a gentleman comes down from town four days a week to teach Latin; and Miss Pasco, she looks over the whole,—the housekeeping, and the young gentlemen's clothes, and all that, and well she does it."

"Very good. Now go and pack my bag, and put in my boating flannels, and send Jane to tell the porter to call a cab in half an hour."

"Tell Miss Reid," he said before starting, "that I shall be back to-morrow, and hope to find her quite well; and just ask her to sign this paper. She will understand what it refers to."

The paper which he sent her to sign was as follows:—

"The bearer, Mr Robert Clifford, is authorised to act on my behalf in all matters regarding which we have hitherto been in communication." Simmonds brought this back with Miss Reid's signature, but with Miss Reid's respects, and she was very sorry he should be at the trouble of undertaking this business. Might it not stand over till Monday?

"Burrard would say with justice," thought Clifford, "that I am earning my title of Monte Cristo, did he know why I have got this signature; and a fine spirit for intrigue it shows me to possess." As he went past Hilda's room he knocked at the door and opened it a little.

"You can't come in," cried Hilda, in a low voice from within,

for indeed she was still lying on the couch without her dress.

"I don't mean to; it was merely to say that I shall hope to find you quite well when I come back to-morrow. You will promise to stay till I come back, won't you?"

"I am driving you away from your own house," replied Hilda, faintly. "I am so sorry."

"Not a bit; this is just the weather for an afternoon on the river. I am quite glad of an excuse for an outing."

"And oh, Mr Clifford," continued the voice from the couch, just as he was moving off, "I am so sorry about your having to do that business yourself."

"What business?"

"The business I signed the paper for. I suppose it is about giving the school children their day in the country?"

"A capital guess. I *am* going to see about the school children in the country?"

"But might it not stand over till Monday? And then I could save you all the trouble."

"Quite impossible. You think I am such an idle fellow I can do nothing. And why are you to have all the fun? I am bent on looking after the school children myself. Good-bye, and keep quiet till to-morrow." And he closed the door and went out.

On his way to the station he posted three telegrams. One was to his aunt to excuse himself from an engagement to dine with her in Charles Street that evening—the second excuse he had sent in three days. One was from Mrs Simmonds to Captain Reid, to say that Miss Reid was going to stay the night in town with her. The third was to Miss Pasco. The answer to this last reached him while he was eating his luncheon at the hotel at Slaye. The young man smiled as

he read it, and looked at himself in the coffee-room mirror.

"I don't look like a Monte Cristo, or a destroyer, or a villain; still less do I look like the destined bridegroom of the handsomest woman in London. Well," he thought, as he drove off to Mr Brake's school, "I daresay I am a little impulsive in taking this step. I suspect I *am* impulsive. I am always doing things on the spur of the moment, and very often get imposed upon in consequence. By taking charge of this boy, I am practically getting mixed up with the whole family, and the male portion are evidently not a very nice lot. And what will be the effect on Hilda herself? Why, I suppose that she will be more 'grateful' than ever; that we shall be really still further apart, instead of nearer. Gratitude and all the moral qualities are detestable. Well, I must see the thing out."

Arrived at the Slaye Commercial and Collegiate Academy, Clifford was shown into the same dingy parlour which had received Hilda; and it being a half-holiday, and the boys playing in a scrubby field behind the schoolroom, little Arthur was soon summoned to his presence. The child entered timidly, and a look of disappointment came over his face when he saw a stranger in the room. He had supposed it must be his father or brother who who had come to see him.

He is very like his sister, thought the visitor, but he is like the brother too. "Won't you come and shake hands, Arthur," said Clifford, not without a shock as he took the child's hand in his own, and wiping the latter afterwards in his pocket, furtively, so as not to hurt Arthur's feelings. "So you had a visit from your sister yesterday?"

At the mention of Hilda the little fellow's eyes filled with tears.

"You were very glad to see her, were you not?"

This was too much for the child: the mention of his sister's name brought back too vividly the contrast between home happiness and school misery. Lulled for a time by half-holiday pleasures, Arthur had been almost happy that afternoon; for with the moral aroma of the cake still clinging to him, there had been no bullying, and the younger boys had been left to themselves; and playing cricket in a corner of the field with some other little fellows, a pile of jackets doing duty for stumps, he had almost forgotten his misery. But now the recollection of the sweet agony of pleasure during his sister's visit came up again in all its freshness, and he burst out crying.

"Don't cry, there's a brave boy," said Clifford, patting him kindly on the head. "You are fond of your sister, I see; she is very good to you when you are at home?"

The child could not find words, as Clifford went on in this strain, but it was easy to see how Hilda occupied the first place in his thoughts.

"You would like to see your sister again, wouldn't you, Arthur?"

Arthur looked wistfully round the room, as if Hilda might be hidden behind the dingy curtains. "She will be at home every morning and evening in the holidays," he answered. "She says she is never going away from home again."

Clifford winced at this remark, but continued—"Well, now, but suppose we manage that you should see her very soon—to-morrow, for instance? I don't mean here," he added, as the child looked at him with eager eyes, "but somewhere else. But there is no time to lose," and, ringing the bell, he asked to see Mr Brake, sending the child to

put on his best clothes. Putting on Sunday clothes of a week-day evidently meant business, and Arthur hurried away to change and get made clean, although not altogether liking to lose sight of his new friend.

Clifford opened his business with the master quickly. Miss Reid's friends wished her to move her brother to another school, and, as she was not well enough to travel, he had come to arrange the matter for her. He produced her paper of authority.

"It was the Captain who brought little Reid here," objected the master; "not Miss Reid."

"But you are no doubt quite aware that it is Miss Reid who pays for his schooling? There is, however, of course no intention of putting you to any loss by this sudden removal. I am prepared to settle, on her behalf, the boy's account, as if he had remained for the whole term."

"It is always usual," replied the other, "to require a term's notice, or a term's payment in advance, if notice is not given."

"That seems reasonable," replied Clifford, after thinking for a moment whether it really was reasonable. "Well, if you will include another term's charge in the account, I will settle it now;" and Clifford drew out his purse and pocket-book.

"Times are really so hard," said Mr Brake, apologetically, as, after going out and returning with the account made out, he counted over the money handed to him, and gave a receipt; "what with the competition, and the high price of butcher's meat, and the liberal treatment we give our boys, I can assure you, sir, it is very hard to make two ends meet nowadays." And, no doubt, it was hard, for if the life at the Commercial and Col-

legiate Academy was rough, the terms were low, and Mr Brake had a large family of his own to feed in addition to the boys.

Presently Mrs Brake came in with her little dear, as she called Arthur, carrying his bundle—for Clifford had suggested that he need not take his everyday suit away with him, and his wardrobe was not big enough to need a box—and kissed him as he went away. And as the lady had six children of her own, no doubt her heart was large enough to take in all the boarders, one at a time, when friends came to see them. Mr Brake also, although still scowling, shook hands with him, after which Arthur shrank behind his new protector. Where he was going he knew not and cared not; it was enough happiness that he was going away somewhere, and to see his sister. But he hardly believed himself safe till the cab drove off, leaving Mr and Mrs Brake waving their adieus from the door.

A few minutes afterwards Master Harry, true to his appointment, arrived at the school, having left his boat at Castle Royal and walked over, to find that his brother had been taken away, his sister's warrant and Clifford's card remaining as vouchers for the abduction.

"So Clifford is the swell's name," said the young man to himself, as he walked away again, "and he lives at the Alexandra Mansions! The murder is out, and without any spying on Hilda. And he is taking Arthur to another school? Why is he doing that, and what does it all mean? I told Hilda I would not pry into her secrets, and I haven't. I have acted honourably by her." Here his dull conscience gave him a twinge. "But if the swell wants to take up with the whole family, I don't see why I should balk him. Why is

Arthur to have all the luck, I should like to know? be hanged to him; I have been kept in the background long enough."

Clifford returned to town next day by a mid-day train. Driving home, for he was in a hurry, and knocking at the door of Hilda's room, he was this time asked to come in, and found her sitting up waiting to receive him. Was it gratitude, or pleasure at his coming, or merely the strangeness of the situation, which called up the pretty blush that chased away the paleness left by yesterday's attack. She was quite well again, however, she assured him, and Simmonds had taken the greatest care of her.

"Well, then, are you ready to start home?"

"Quite ready," she said — "I have only to get my hat;" and she moved towards the other room. No wonder he wanted to get rid of her; of course she must be very much in his way. But although she wanted to thank him for all his kindness, she would not do so: she knew that he disliked being thanked.

"I will go part way with you," he said, "and Simmonds shall go too. She has an old friend at Richmond whom she would like to pay a visit to. We will all go together as far as Richmond." And they set off for the station, Hilda and Simmonds in a cab, Clifford, who never drove if he could walk, preceding them on foot.

He took tickets for Barnes, and when the train reached that place, he proposed to Hilda to get out with him and Simmonds. She might very well stop for an hour or so; they would not be expecting her at home so early in the day. She had never seen Richmond Park. He would see her off again by a later train.

"Miss Pasco lived at Richmond, I thought, sir," observed Simmonds, as they drove across Barnes Common in an open carriage which they had found at the station.

"Her house is between Barnes and Richmond," replied Clifford; "this is the nearest way coming from town, and it enables Miss Reid to see something of the place. We are going to see the old friend of Simmonds," he said to Hilda, by way of explanation—"the lady with whom she lived before she came to my uncle."

They drove along a shady road near the park, and at last stopped at a comfortable-looking house with a little garden in front, and the name, "Miss Pasco," on a brass-plate attached to the gate. The door was opened by a neat maid, who seemed to recognise Clifford, and presently Miss Pasco herself came into the room into which they were shown,—a middle-aged little lady, very neat, like everything about her, with a shrewd but kindly face.

After an exchange of greetings between Simmonds and Miss Pasco, Clifford introduced himself as the former's present employer, although a smile played about Miss Pasco's face as he did so, and then introduced Hilda as a lady who had come to see her school, adding by way of explanation to Hilda, "Miss Pasco has a school for little boys. Can we see the little fellows this afternoon, Miss Pasco?"

Certainly, sir; they are all in the garden, but they are just going out for a walk in the park with Miss Palmer and Miss Playfair. They always go for a walk on Sunday afternoon in summer, and to church in the evening. The church is so hot for them in the afternoon. If you will step this way we shall see them."

At the back of the house was a

spacious garden, laid out near the house in turf and shrubs; but standing on the steps the visitors could command the view of a large gravelled portion at the further end, terminated by a roomy shed, and what appeared to be a fives-court.

"That is the regular playground at the end," explained Miss Pasco, "and for wet weather; but they go into the park for their cricket and foot-ball, and they have the run of the whole garden on Sunday afternoons if the grass is dry."

The boys were all scattered over the lawn, but in course of moving up to collect on the path, there to be marshalled by the two governesses into a column two abreast, preparatory to setting out for their walk. The task was not an easy one, for each little fellow was talking at the top of his voice, and seemed unable to make up his mind which other he should have as his companion. Miss Playfair, a tall, good-natured looking girl, seemed bewildered; but Miss Palmer, of longer experience, soon evoked order out of chaos, like the police clearing the Ascot racecourse, putting the taller boys, dressed in top-hats and jackets and trousers, in front, and the younger ones, wearing caps and knickerbockers, in rear. And the line once formed was set in motion along the walk, and then turning, passed in front of the steps on which the visitors were standing, making its way to a gate leading from the back to the front garden. An orderly procession enough, but the little fellows were all chattering away in high spirits, the tallest in front, the

smallest boys behind, the two governesses bringing up the rear with one child between them, for whom there was no partner. The scene told its own tale of the management of the school. The boys were happy, well-cared for, and obedient.

"This is rather different from the Commercial and Collegiate Academy," said Clifford to Hilda, as the leading files came opposite the terrace on which they were standing.

Hilda looked at him as if to ask what made him draw the comparison, and there was something in his voice and the gleam of his eye which made her turn again to look at the group more carefully.

"Hilda!" cried a little voice in accents of delight from between the two governesses; and "Arthur!" cried his sister in return, as she ran down the steps to greet him.

"If she feels like that towards a brother, what would she be to a lover?" thought Clifford; watching with a sense of bitterness mingled with pleasure the meeting of the two.

"Such a business as we had all yesterday evening, Mr Clifford," said Miss Pasco, aside; "I really thought we should never have got him clean. And if you had seen the state the poor child's head was in; we had to burn his hair-brush, and to throw away most of his clothes. But he looks quite a different boy already, doesn't he? He seems a nice little fellow."

When Hilda turned round to where Clifford had been standing when she ran down to her brother, he had disappeared.

SHADWELL'S LIFE OF LORD CLYDE.

IN all the annals of 'Self-Help' there is not to be found a life more truly worthy of study than that of the gallant old soldier whose story is now for the first time told. The simple, self-denying, friend-helping, brave, patriotic soldier stands proclaimed in every line of General Shadwell's admirable memoir. With characteristic modesty, and that shrinking from notoriety which increased with age, the veteran Lord Clyde was unwilling to become the subject of a biographical notice, but he left the matter to the discretion of his trustees. "It may," he said, "possibly become their opinion that some short memoir should be drawn up. If this should appear to them to be absolutely necessary and indispensable (which I should regret, and hope may be avoided), then it should be limited, as much as possible, to the modest recital of the services of an old soldier." Seventeen years have passed since the old soldier died, full of years and honours; and his tried and trusted friend, Henry Eyre, has felt that the relation of this honourable chivalrous life would afford an "encouraging example to all young soldiers, who will see in it to what the humblest and most friendless of them may aspire, when animated by that noble sense of duty which seemed to influence every act of his eventful military career." And so the materials were placed in the hands of General Shadwell, Colin Campbell's friend and companion in China, in the battles of the Punjab, on the heights of Alma, and in front of

Balaklava; and he has carried out his labour of love in a manner that would surely meet the approval of his old chief's honest, manly spirit, could it read this simple record of a life devoted to duty.

Yes—a life devoted to duty! How few words—how great a meaning! Duty placed first throughout a life of seventy years' duration; the pleasures so dear to the young, the pride of a proud man, the longing of age for repose, each in turn sternly subordinated to the one great guiding principle. A weary life, a life full of struggle, in which much of brightness had to be abandoned; yet Colin Campbell would not have exchanged his blameless conscience, his sense of honest independence, his pride in duty done, for every other gift the world could offer. The man who, out of the pay of a regimental captain and no other means, supplied his father with from £30 to £40 a-year; who yet in China would not touch a fraction of loot, to which so many helped themselves bountifully, because he wished to stand right with his own conscience, and to prevent the possibility of reproach from others while enforcing discipline by the orders of his superiors; who, though feeling bitterly the unmerited slight cast upon him, accepted an inferior command in the Crimea under his junior, telling the Queen that he would "serve under a corporal if she wished it;" who, at sixty-two years of age, having declined the command of an expedition to China on the score of "age, long

service, and liability to fever and ague, after so many years' exposure in tropical climates," when called upon at three o'clock one afternoon to take the supreme command in India, under the most difficult circumstances any British general was ever called to face, expressed his readiness to start the same evening, and did actually start the next,—that man, not for these acts only, which are but typical of his whole career, may well be called, as Hamley has so justly called Wellington, "the soldier of duty."

It is the fashion of the day to speak of the luck of every successful soldier. Wolseley, whose first experience of war was to lead a storming-party as a volunteer, and to be so badly wounded that he has suffered lifelong pain and inconvenience; whose next campaign brought to him, again a volunteer, more severe wounds; and who twice, at the end of difficult operations, conducted with unblemished success, returned to England to find the Government which employed him overthrown, and his services comparatively forgotten; who has carved out his own fortunes by untiring energy,—is the type of the lucky man in the eyes of military club-land. Roberts, who has gained for himself by sheer ability, honest hard work, and soldier-like qualities, every successive promotion and appointment, and who has made each step but the starting-point for fresh exertion and further progress;—Roberts, who saw his success rewarded by supersession by a senior officer at Kabul, inevitable under the circumstances, but yet wounding to his pride—who made for himself the opportunity which his military genius grasped and carried so gallantly through,—was congratulated at the United Service Club dinner on his luck by

the Commander-in-Chief of the army. Of such a nature was Colin Campbell's luck. Wound after wound in his early service, where he was always foremost in the post of danger, rewarded by years of weary languishing on half-pay, because he was too poor to purchase the step that would have given him employment; reproof by the Governor-General for a line of action in the Punjab that merited only praise; supersession in the Crimea by an officer who had no superior claim but that of comparative youth—such was Colin Campbell's luck. Where ninety-nine men in a hundred would have been swamped, he rose to the surface. Bearing ever before his eyes the spirit of the motto inscribed on one of his note-books—

"Durch die Geduld, Vernunft, und Zeit,
Wird möglich die Unmöglichkeit"—

"By means of patience, commonsense, and time, impossibility becomes possible,"—Colin Macliver, the penniless son of a Glasgow carpenter, rose to be a field-marshal and a peer of Great Britain.

And here let us at once dispel a cloud which in some minds still rests upon the honest old hero's name. "I have always," said recently a friend to the writer of this review, "thought meanly of Lord Clyde for one thing. He was ashamed of his father's name, and changed it for another." The accusation is not true. When Colin Macliver, then a boy of fifteen and a half years old, was taken by his maternal uncle, Colonel John Campbell, who had taken charge of him from the age of ten, to be introduced to the Duke of York, the Commander-in-Chief, supposing the boy to be "another of the clan," entered his name as Colin Campbell. The boy remarked upon it to his uncle, who told him that Camp-

bell was a name it would suit him for professional reasons to adopt, and bid him let it stand. What boy of that age would have done, otherwise than follow the advice of his uncle and guardian? And that is the cause why, on 26th May 1808, he was gazetted to the 9th Regiment as Colin Campbell.

Three months later he was engaged in the battle of Vimiero:—

“It was at the commencement of this battle that a circumstance occurred to the young subaltern, to which in after-years he was wont to refer with the deepest feelings of gratitude. Colin Campbell was with the rear company of his battalion, which was halted in open column of companies. His captain, an officer of years and experience, called him to his side, took him by the hand, and leading him by the flank of the battalion to its front, walked with him up and down the front of the leading company for several minutes, in full view of the enemy’s artillery, which had begun to open fire on our troops, whilst covering his attack. He then let go the boy’s hand (Colin was not yet sixteen), and told him to join his company. The object was to give the youngster confidence, and it succeeded. In after-years, though very reticent of his own services—for Lord Clyde was essentially a modest man—he related the anecdote to the writer of this memoir, adding, ‘It was the greatest kindness that could have been shown me at such a time, and through life I have felt grateful for it.’”

In January 1809, he took part with his regiment in Sir John Moore’s terrible retreat on Corunna. He had to march with bare feet, the soles of his boots being completely worn away. He had no means of replacing his boots, and when he got on board ship he was unable to remove them, as, from constant wear and his inability to take them off, the leather had adhered so closely to the flesh of his legs, that he was obliged to steep them in water as hot as he could bear, and

have the leather cut away in strips—a painful operation, as in the process pieces of the skin were cut away with it.

Then came the abortive expedition to Walcheren—7000 of the 40,000 British troops embarked perished on the spot from malarial fever; and the remainder carried away the seeds of fever and ague, which clung to most of them—Colin Campbell included—for life; and the boy was not yet eighteen!

His history at this time is a history of the battles of the British with the French. At Barrosa he was noticed by Lord Lynedoch (then Sir Thomas Graham) for his conduct in command of the two flank companies of his regiment, all the other officers being wounded. In the same year (1811) he was engaged in the expedition for the relief of Tarragona, at Coin and Alhaurin, in the valley of Malaga, and at the siege of Tarifa. In 1813 he took part in the passage of the Douro, and in the operations up to and including Vitoria, where he saw the bridge so heaped with dead and wounded that they were rolled over the parapet into the river beneath; and he led the forlorn-hope in that terrible storming of San Sebastian, where our assault failed. His description and criticism of the conduct of the action, as extracted from a letter written by him to Sir John Cameron, are most interesting. His personal share in it is thus simply described:—

“On arriving at the breach, I observed the whole lower parts thickly strewn with killed and wounded. There were a few individual officers and men spread on the face of the breach, but nothing more. These were cheering, and gallantly opposing themselves to the close and destructive fire directed at them from the round tower and other defences on each flank of the breach, and to a

profusion of hand-grenades which were constantly rolling down. In going up I passed Jones of the Engineers, who was wounded; and on gaining the top I was shot through the right hip, and tumbled to the bottom. The breach, though quite accessible, was steep, particularly towards the top, so that all those who were struck on the upper part of it, rolled down, as in my own case, to the bottom. Finding, on rising up, that I was not disabled from moving, and observing two officers of the Royals, who were exerting themselves to lead some of their men from under the line-wall near to the breach, I went to assist their endeavours, and again went up the breach with them when I was shot through the inside part of the left thigh. . . .”

For his conduct here he was recommended to Lord Wellington by Sir Thomas Graham. That conduct is thus described by Napier in terms which twenty-six years later were read by Sir Charles Napier to Campbell's regiment on parade:—

“Major Frazer was killed on the flaming ruins; the intrepid Jones stood there a while longer amidst a few heroic soldiers, hoping for aid, but none came, and he and those with him were struck down. The Engineer, Machel, had been killed early, and the men bearing the ladders fell or were dispersed. Thus the rear of the column was in absolute confusion before the head was beaten. It was in vain that Colonel Greville of the 38th, Colonel Cameron of the 9th, Captain Archimbeau of the Royals, and many other regimental officers, exerted themselves to rally their discomfited troops and refill the breach; it was in vain that Lieutenant Campbell, breaking through the tumultuous crowd with the survivors of his chosen detachment, mounted the ruins—twice he ascended, twice he was wounded, and all around him died!”

Yet, full of the true soldier's ardour for the fight, he crawled out of the hospital at San Sebastian, where he had been left behind wounded, and made his way to the

army, which he reached the day before the action of Fuenterrabia, in time to command the light and leading company of his regiment, and to be again badly wounded. The gallant conduct of himself and a brother officer, who had escaped from the San Sebastian hospital with him, mitigated the severity of the reprimand addressed to them by their colonel for the breach of discipline they had committed.

Such was Colin Campbell's spirit, such his services against the enemy, before he had completed his twenty-first year. How well we can understand his indignation when, nearly fifty years later, after the Indian campaign, some visitor asked him to facilitate the promotion of his son, on the ground that he had been in a position of considerable danger! The soldier who, all uncured of his wounds, had broken the rules of discipline, and subjected himself to a reprimand, simply to take part in another bloody fight, was surely justified in his answer:—

“So he was in a position of danger, was he? I tell you what, sir! your son was very favoured and most fortunate to be placed in such a position. We soldiers consider it the best thing that can happen to us, and we value it as much, if not more, than promotion.”

His twenty-first birthday saw Colin Campbell, after all these services, still a subaltern; but a few days later he was promoted to a company without purchase in the 60th Regiment, and returned to England in December 1813 with a letter of recommendation from Major-General Hay as a most gallant and meritorious officer. Hitherto he had only had his subaltern's pay to live on; now, with a captain's pay and a temporary pension of £100 a-year for his wounds, he was quite a rich man. Failing in

an attempt to get staff employment with the expedition to Holland, he joined his battalion in Nova Scotia ; but his wounds compelled his return to England, and subsequently his residence for a time in a warm climate. At this time he visited Paris, and doubtless began his studies of the French language. Presently we find him serving again with the 60th at Gibraltar, and there acquiring Spanish as best he could ; and later, transferred to the 21st Regiment, and serving with it first at Barbadoes, and then as aide-de-camp and brigade-major at Demerara, first to General Murray, and then to Sir Benjamin D'Urban, with whom he formed a lifelong friendship. Seven years thus slipped by in regimental and staff employment, till at the age of thirty-three, and with over seventeen years' service, he was enabled, through the spontaneous liberality of a friend in the colony, who advanced him the money, to purchase his majority. It was a bold step to incur this debt ; but it gave him the chance of a career, instead of the misery of blighted prospects. He was soon enough destined to feel bitterly the curse of poverty.

Service at Windsor, in Ireland, at Weedon, and at Chatham occupied the next few years, till at last, in October 1832, when he had entered his forty-first year, he obtained an unattached lieut.-coloneley, by purchase, through the kindness of a relation on the mother's side, who advanced him the necessary £1300.

Ever determined to waste no time, he no sooner obtained the leisure granted by half-pay, than he proceeded to Antwerp, and witnessed the operations of the French from beginning to end of the siege. He was much struck by the gallant defence of the Dutch, who, to his astonishment, when he

saw them as prisoners, were "a parcel of mere boys." Numbers of them had never shaved. It is curious, bearing in mind the peace which has lasted for nearly fifty years since that date between the French and ourselves, to read the following extract from Lieut.-Colonel Campbell's diary :—

"Every French officer with whom I spoke ridiculed the idea of the alliance between our countries continuing beyond the moment. They compared it to a quadrille, the figure of which required that we should join hands for an instant, but at the conclusion of which we should resume our natural and ancient positions of *des vis-à-vis*."

The siege over, he visited Germany in order to study German, but was recalled to England by the advice of a friend, who warned him that, by his absence, he was losing chances of employment. In fact he had lost a chance of being employed on the Portuguese frontier. A year now passed in the weariness of waiting for employment—waiting in poverty, always helping his father from the wretched pittance of a lieutenant-colonel on half-pay. And yet, though disappointed in his endeavours, there was no querulous grumbling either at the system or at the authorities. They offered him the 62d Regiment on paying the difference. He had not the money. His hopes were raised once or twice, but again dashed to the ground. With means wholly inadequate for London, yet afraid to leave it lest his opportunity should be lost, he vainly sought the appointment of Governor of Sierra Leone. On the ground that it would not be to his advantage, and probably utterly incapable of understanding the distress and straits in which Campbell's poverty placed him, Lord Fitzroy Somerset advised him to abandon the idea of such employment. And on the 11th

October 1834, the following entry occurs in his journal :—

“It is exactly twelve months since I was called back to England from Germany, with a view to my employment with others on a particular service in Spain. It afterwards became unnecessary to send us; and here have I been lingering on from week to week, and month to month, in the expectation and belief that some opening would offer which would enable them to employ me, always a prisoner to London or its immediate neighbourhood. It has been a sickening time to me; and what makes it more disagreeable is the little appearance, even after twelve months of misery, of such a termination as would be satisfactory.”

It was at this time that Campbell did the one reckless act of his life. He put his name to a friend's bill for £412. How many a poor man, knowing what he must have come to himself but for the help of friends, has reasoned that he cannot refuse such help to a friend! Luckily Campbell escaped the almost invariable result of the act of friendship.

Throughout the Life, woven in as woof with web, runs the perpetual thread of the ever-present burden of poverty. Elected a member of the United Service Club, it was only by borrowing half the entrance fee that he could accept the membership. What wonder that at times his spirits sank, as he found the years slipping by, his health by no means perfect, his services all wasted, as it seemed, for want of a few hundreds of pounds to buy employment and higher pay? The only wonder is that he was able to maintain that character of a pleasant social companion which he certainly held among a large circle of acquaintances and friends, and that special love for children and power of winning their affection, which never yet were possessed by a soured or bitter man.

In the spring of 1835, he was offered the employment he so earnestly desired; and had the choice between his old regiment, the 9th, serving in India, and the 98th, about to return to England from the Cape. It was a hard struggle to decide. On the one hand, the delight of commanding his old regiment, and the chance of saving a little money; on the other hand, the state of his health—the “old, miserable, Demerara fever,” sure to return after a short stay in Bengal, and the inconvenience from his wounds “which would be perpetual in India, and my life would be miserable.” And so he decided upon “the preservation and enjoyment of the little health left him,”—adding in his journal, “Beyond the desire to be independent of all pecuniary relief, I care not one straw for money, or its accumulation.”

From this period dates Colin Campbell's acquaintance with Henry Eyre, then a captain commanding the depot of the 98th; an acquaintance that soon ripened into friendship, and in time into an intimacy of the most affectionate and enduring character. And now, when the regiment had returned home, we see our hero at last in the coveted position of responsibility and command. General Shadwell gives a most interesting description of the system upon which Campbell commanded his regiment, the system which he tells us was the legacy of Sir John Moore to the British Army.

We reproduce the following extract, giving a picture, doubtless thoroughly true, of the best type of regimental commanding officer :—

“Stern in rebuke—for with the temperament natural to his Highland blood, he was prone to anger when occasion stirred it—he was, on the other hand, gentle, nay indulgent,

towards all such as manifested anxiety in the performance of their duties. Nor did he make any difference between ranks. Setting himself an example of punctuality and strictness with regard to his own duties, he exacted from his officers a like discharge of theirs in all that concerned the instruction, wellbeing, and conduct of the subordinate ranks. Though no doubt there were occasions on which, from an excess of zeal, he was apt somewhat to overstrain the machinery of which he was the moving principle, yet he succeeded in establishing and maintaining such feeling and *esprit de corps* in all ranks, as made both officers and soldiers happy and proud of serving under his command. His endeavour was to make the 98th a sound, well-instructed, and serviceable regiment, such as any corps will be, commanded by an officer of energy and judgment in strict conformity with the regulations. How far he was successful in this object the reader will judge for himself.

"Frugal in his habits by nature and the force of circumstances, he laid great stress on the observance of economy in the officers' mess, believing that a well-ordered establishment of this kind is the best index of a good regiment. For this reason he determined not to sanction the use of any wine but port and sherry; the introduction of other wines he viewed as an extravagance; and he set himself against any expenditure which he considered incommensurate with the means of his officers. Regarding the mess as one of the principal levers of discipline, Colin Campbell made a rule of attending it, even when the frequent return of his fever and ague rendered late dinners a physical discomfort to him. Cramped in his means, he denied himself many little comforts in order that he might have the wherewithal to return hospitality, and be able to set an example to his brother officers in the punctual discharge of his mess liabilities. His intercourse with his officers off duty was unrestrained and of the most friendly character. He sympathised with them in their occupations and sports, and though the instruction and discipline of the regiment were carried on with great strictness, the best feel-

ing pervaded all ranks, so that everything was done in good-humour."

We have dwelt thus long upon the earlier stages of Lord Clyde's life, because it is in this period of his career that his character was steadily formed and matured in regimental command. Our notice, which has thus far only carried us through the first two chapters of General Shadwell's book, has none the less brought us to its hero's forty-sixth year. At that age judgment is matured, character is formed; and in Campbell's later years we shall see the influence of his earlier experiences bearing fruit of no mean value.

It was while on the march with the 98th to Newcastle-on-Tyne that Colonel Campbell first met at York Sir Charles Napier. That General, who was commanding the Northern District, arrived at noon on Sunday at the inn where Campbell was quartered, halted for the day. Napier had the "assembly" sounded, and, in his ordinary travelling dress, inspected the regiment in front of the inn.

What Napier learned to think of Campbell, can be gathered by reading his speech to the 98th, when he presented them with new colours two years afterwards. Reading to the men that extract from his brother's history which we have already quoted, at the end of it he said,—“There stands Lieutenant Campbell; and well I know that, should need be, the soldiers of the 98th would follow him as boldly as did those gallant men of the glorious 9th who fell fighting around him in the breaches of San Sebastian.”

It does one's heart good to read this soul-stirring speech. Speaking of it later, the General said,—“I was not lying when I said I was proud of presenting the colours to the regiment. Some

men laugh at these matters. To me they appear of the highest importance, and to be the foundation of that spirit to which we owe Waterloo and all the rest."

Eleven years later, Campbell, then serving in India, had examined the difficult passes leading into Cashmere, and thus expressed his opinion of the General, who was then Commander-in-Chief in India: "With Sir Charles Napier as Commander-in-Chief, I should be well pleased to be employed in such a war, and to command the advance, but I know of no other officer under whom I would desire or seek to hold such a command."

After passing some three years in the north of England, where Chartistism was causing much alarm—and a short time in Ireland, where election riots were anticipated—the 98th was ordered to China. It reached Hong-Kong in June 1842, and took part in the war of that year. Cholera, dysentery, fever, and sunstroke did their work upon troops landed from a six months' voyage in a miserably crowded troop-ship, and unprovided with any clothing but their ordinary European dress. In six months, out of the 810 who had sailed from Plymouth, the regiment had lost by death 283, and had still 231 sick, of whom 50 or 60 were sure to die,—and all this without having lost one man by the fire of the enemy. At the end of another twelve months, the total of deaths had mounted to 432. Well might the commanding officer, himself a severe sufferer in health, mourn over the wreck of his splendid regiment; and yet in his journal there does not appear a word of complaint against those whose want of precautions thus threw away the lives of his soldiers.

Two years and a half passed in command of Chusan, enabled Campbell to do much towards the ob-

jects dearest to his heart—the restoration of his regiment to perfect condition, the relief of his most pressing liabilities, and the making some provision for his sister and his father. And yet he wrote here—"I have only one thought and wish left, and that is for repose; for my spirit has already been sufficiently broken by disappointment, and as all I have wished to please have sunk into the grave, success or miscarriage in the struggles of professional life have become empty sounds." Probably this was written in a fit of depression caused by fever; for a few months later he wrote: "Anniversary of Barrosa! an old story—thirty-five years ago—thank God for all his goodness to me. Although I have suffered much in health, and many ways, I am still as active as any man in my regiment."

In 1846, when Colonel Campbell had just completed his fifty-fourth year, he saw India for the first time. In the midst of the pride with which he speaks of the splendid condition of his regiment, of the spirit of the officers, and their respectful affection for himself, the old sore of poverty is visible. He was told he was to be appointed a brigadier, and writes: "This is very flattering; but I would prefer remaining with my regiment, because I should be a richer man than if I were to go as a general officer to the Punjab."

Appointed Brigadier-General at Lahore, he bade farewell to his regiment. On the journey up-country he met Lord Hardinge, the Governor-General, and Lord Gough, Commander-in-Chief. Both received him kindly and cordially. But it was in Colonel Henry Lawrence, the Resident at Lahore, that he found the most kindred spirit, who won his heart, not alone by his personal kindness, but by being

ever ready to do good, kind, and considerate acts to the garrison.

His time was now very fully occupied in studying the security of his post, and in making dispositions against surprise, which might at any moment be feared from the still formidable Sikh army. "I am delighted," wrote his old friend Sir Charles Napier, to whom he had communicated his plans, "at all your precautions against surprise. In India we who take these pains are reckoned cowards." There was small fear of either Campbell or Napier caring what might be said against their courage. At this time he made the friendship of John (afterwards Lord) Lawrence, who for a time succeeded his brother as Resident; and here too, Mansfield (afterwards Lord Sandhurst), then a captain in the 53d Foot, came first under the eye of his future chief.

And now took place the revolt of Moolraj, followed by military preparations for a march upon Mooltan;—attempts to seduce the sepoys from their allegiance, followed by prompt punishment. "Thank God we had Campbell there!" was Lord Gough's expression when he heard the details of the events.

On the 26th May 1848, Brigadier Campbell records the completion of his fortieth year of service, remarking that it was a long time to have served, and expressing his gratitude "that his health, under all circumstances, was wonderfully good, enabling him to go through as much exercise and fatigue as the youngest man in the force;" and further, that "at that moment he was very nearly clear of debt, and of all pecuniary obligation."

Health and strength, and the freedom of spirits gained by his hard-earned release from debt, were soon to be put to the trial. But first one more disappointment

was at hand. Two junior officers were selected for the command of brigades to proceed to Mooltan, and he was left behind at Lahore. Meanwhile war was fast brewing in the Punjab; and while Napier (afterwards Lord Napier of Magdala) was opening his parallels for the siege of Mooltan, Rajah Shere Singh, with all his troops, went over from our side to the enemy, and the siege had to be raised. Campbell at once threw troops from Lahore into Govindghur, the fort of Umritzur, the ancient and sacred capital of the Sikhs—a step which relieved Lord Gough's mind of a world of anxiety. The revolt spread fast; and in November Campbell received orders to form a strong brigade from the garrison of Lahore, and advance to support Cureton's cavalry brigade and the infantry on the Ravee. But the Commissary-General could neither furnish supplies for ten days—nor transport, had the supplies been forthcoming. So on 10th November Campbell marched with only two native regiments.

The account given in his diary of the action of Ramnuggur is remarkably interesting. Lord Gough came upon the ground and assumed virtual command of an operation he had intrusted to Campbell and Cureton. He interfered with Campbell's intention to bring infantry to support the guns in a position of much danger. He took personal direction of a number of isolated cavalry fights, in one of which poor Cureton was killed.

The journal of 27th November contains only the following:—

"Sent for by the Commander-in-Chief and offered the situation of Adjutant-General of the Queen's troops, previously held by Colonel Cureton. No desire for the appointment. Stated fairly and unhesitatingly my wish to get back to Europe."

We should lose ourselves in

military details were we to attempt to describe the action of Sadoolapore, where General Thackwell, in command, refused, according to Campbell, to allow him to attack, thus losing a great opportunity; or even Chillianwala, graphically as the story is told in the diary. The magnificent conduct of H.M.'s 61st Regiment here, in contrast with that of some of the native infantry regiments, reminds us of the bravery of the 66th at the recent disastrous struggle of Maiwand. Brigadier Campbell himself personally guided and led the 61st in two successful charges upon the enemy's guns, when he received a deep sword-cut in the right arm from an artilleryman defending his gun. This man had first fired at him with a matchlock, the ball luckily striking a double-barrelled pistol in his pocket, which thus saved his life. A sentence in a letter to his sister, written after the battle, reminds one of Wellington's despatch after Waterloo: "The loss of so many fine fellows, and that of my oldest and dearest friends, is very saddening." And then crops up the old theme: "If it should please God to take me through this war, I hope my circumstances will admit of my return to England in the course of another year. I must say, however, that I never entered action with a lighter and happier heart, for I had you provided for."

The General's journal takes us through the events preceding the battle of Goojrat, the clear description of the military movements being interspersed with expressions of longing to get away from irksome details, and to pass the remainder of life in the society of the few still remaining ones whom he most loves. And then comes a vivid description of the battle of Goojrat, chiefly remarkable for

Campbell's expression of "very great and exceeding satisfaction" at the success which he had reaped through the proper use of his artillery. By a judicious front and flank fire, he stopped the enemy's advance; he drove them by enfilade fire from the nullah they were holding, and so enabled the whole left wing of the army to pass this formidable defence without losing a man. "We had," he says, "too much slaughter of human life at Chillianwala, without due precaution having been taken to prevent it by the employment of our magnificent artillery. Having felt this strongly, and having expressed it to the Commander-in-Chief in warm terms, I determined to employ this weapon against the enemy to the fullest extent, whenever we should again come in contact with them; and I did so accordingly at the battle of Goojrat." A better answer than this entry in the journal could not be found to the rumour circulated that he was himself to blame for the artillery not having been properly used at Chillianwala.

The surrender of the Sikh army which followed, is told with soldier-like sympathy for men beaten in fair fight. His tribute to their manner of action and of speech is that of a brave man to brave men. "They are undoubtedly," he says, "a fine and brave people."

The excitement of the Sikh war over, Campbell was detained in command at Rawal Pindi. He had the delight of serving under his old friend Sir Charles Napier, who succeeded Lord Gough very shortly after the war; and a combination among the native infantry, assuming a very critical aspect, gave him much to think of, and much scope for the exercise of tact and firmness. This was indeed but the muttering of the storm

which burst eight years later. Sir Charles Napier seriously contemplated the possibility of mutiny, not confined to one station, and requiring force for its suppression. Campbell, firm and self-reliant, carefully avoiding, and preventing on the part of others, any language of an irritating or intemperate nature, quietly suppressed the threatened revolt, without yielding a point.

Still the monotony of the life, and the constant return of his old enemy, fever, told upon him, and the signs of home-sickness were frequent. In July 1849, he wrote to his friend Lieutenant-Colonel Grant, afterwards Sir Hope Grant, congratulating him on the promotion which he, Campbell, had striven to obtain for him; and in this letter he says:—

“They have made me a K.C.B. I may confess to you I would much rather have got a year's batta; because the latter would enable me to leave this country a year sooner, and to join some friends of my early days, whom I love very much, and in whose society I would like to spend the period which may yet remain to me to live between the camp and the grave. The day I leave this country will terminate my military career.”

In October of the same year he writes in his journal: “Completed my fifty-seventh year of age this day. The desire to enjoy repose from the daily routine of the service grows faster and faster upon me. . . . I am only fit for retirement.”

Transfer to the more important command of Peshawur cheered him up a while. He came again into contact with his old friends the 61st. Sir Charles Napier came up to Peshawur. Troubles with the Afreedees brought him the pleasure of serving again with his beloved chief, and the regiment he so high-

ly admired. His reports upon the proper means of bringing these troublesome hill frontier tribes into subjection, and his notes on the passes into Cashmere, will repay perusal, but cannot be reproduced here.

The journal for the year 1851 thus opens: “Another year begun, and I am still in the East. Stern duty and obligations to fulfil towards others have kept me here, and not any liking or inclination of my own;” and yet, in spite of this endless pressure of poverty and debt, when Lord Dalhousie discussed with him the question of his position, he could reply that it would be more agreeable to him to remain at the advanced post of the army in the subordinate position of brigadier, than to be removed to another command with a higher title and additional emolument. And well he fulfilled his task in organising the frontier defence. But before long occurred a painful affair. The political frontier relations were at this time in the hands of the Board of Administration of the Punjab. Differences of opinion between the civil and military authorities had occasionally arisen; and in the spring of 1852, Campbell declined to accede to the desire of the Board that he should attack the Momunds. His action met with the unqualified support of Sir William Gomm, who, in December 1850, had succeeded Sir C. Napier as Commander-in-Chief, but was not approved by the Governor-General. Soon after he was similarly urged to invade Swat; but evidence having been given that the alleged cause of invasion did not exist, Campbell referred to the Commander-in-Chief, who approved his decision not to invade Swat. The Governor-General, however, formally censured his conduct, informing him that, “not only had

he transgressed the bounds of his proper province, but had placed himself in an attitude of direct and proclaimed insubordination to the authority of the Governor-General in Council." We regret we cannot produce his official reply, still more his private letter to Sir William Gomm. They are models of firm but most respectful assertion of his complete self respect, and of the complete absence from his thoughts of any disrespect to Government. He expressed his painful surprise that, after a life of unswerving military subordination, he should be accused of the reverse; and points out to Sir W. Gomm that it was his extreme attention to the wishes of a superior which had caused him to be accused of insubordination. Campbell resigned his command. The Commander-in-Chief expressed his deep regret at the decision, and promised to explain the affair to Lord Fitzroy Somerset. And it is a relief to know that he was thoroughly backed up by Sir C. Napier in a most characteristically humorous letter.

In March 1853 he reached England on leave of absence. In April 1854 his long-cherished dream of rest was broken by his embarkation for the East as brigadier. Who need be told the names of the regiments that formed that splendid Highland brigade, commanded by Major-General Sir Colin Campbell—for to that rank, after over forty-six years' service, he was promoted before the landing in the Crimea? Major Stirling—afterwards Colonel Sir A. C. Stirling, K.C.B.—was his Brigade-Major; Captain Shadwell, the author of this memoir, his aide-de-camp. General Shadwell has wisely abstained from dwelling upon the familiar events of the Crimean war; and we shall only touch on them in so far as they relate closely to the subject of the memoir. Sir Colin, who lost his favourite

horse, struck by two bullets, at the Alma, was sent for after the action by Lord Raglan. "When I approached him, I observed his eyes to fill and his lips and countenance to quiver. He gave me a cordial shake of the hand, but he could not speak. The men cheered very much." Was ever soldier greeted with more perfect praise than Campbell by this silent eloquence of his chief, this hearty sympathy of his men? And what was the favour he asked as the day's reward?—that he might have the honour of wearing the Highland bonnet during the rest of the campaign, "which pleased the men very much."

We pass over the battle of Bala-klava, noting only that at its close the French General Vinoy was sent with his brigade to assist Sir Colin in the defence of his position, and that from this time dated a sincere friendship between these two genuine soldiers. Campbell's knowledge of French stood him in good stead, both with Vinoy and with Rustem Pasha. Weeks were passed in constant work, in daily and nightly visits to his men employed in strengthening the defences of Bala-klava, in thoughtful care for their comfort in matters of fuel, food, and shelter. He appears to have felt the strain very severely, as the health of his troops suffered in prolonged hardships. Not till the Russians had withdrawn across the Tchernaya would he sleep otherwise than in a tent close to one of his batteries, always dressed, and constantly on the alert. But his physical and mental energy never gave way, and he inspired his men with the utmost confidence. On Christmas-day he was appointed to succeed the Duke of Cambridge in command of the 1st Division. Of his spirit at this time General Shadwell thus writes:—

"Even in the worst times of that weary winter the experienced old soldier had never taken a desponding view of matters. He was quick to recognise Lord Raglan's difficulties, and to see that the work cut out for him was not rendered the less onerous by the fact of England having embarked in such a serious operation as the invasion of the Crimea, after a peace of forty years' duration, with her army reduced in numbers, the administrative services calculated only for home and colonial requirements, and a total deficiency of that organisation which can alone insure success in war. In spite of the murmurs and complaints, which Sir Colin never suffered in his hearing without rebuke, he felt confident that ultimate success would crown the endeavours of the Allied armies. Above all, he had unbounded confidence in Lord Raglan, whom he served with single-hearted devotion. No commander ever possessed a more loyal subordinate."

With the death of Lord Raglan a tide seemed to set in against Sir Colin. He was forbidden to take the duty of general of the day, for which he had voluntarily placed himself on the roster, that he might set an example of punctuality, discipline, and regularity in duty. He felt keenly this order, for which no reason was assigned; he felt far more deeply that neither he nor his fine division was employed in the attack on the Redan; but immeasurably more than either, the offer made to him the day before the assault, of the command at Malta, which he viewed as an attempt to remove him from the army, and as an indignity offered to a soldier actually in the presence of the enemy. There can be no doubt that it was not meant as an indignity, but that his removal was desired. Sir Colin was next in seniority to General Simpson, whose approaching retirement was already whispered loudly, and the authorities at home had another Com-

mander-in-Chief in view. And so, when active operations were brought to a close, but not sooner, Sir Colin, escorted on board ship by Generals Vinoy and Della Marmora, sailed on leave of absence for England. On his way home he crossed the letter bearing the nomination of Sir William Codrington, his junior officer, to the chief command, and a letter to himself from Lord Panmure, the Minister of War.

This letter is full of fine phrases, and appeals to Sir Colin to accept command of an army-corps under Codrington. At their first interview in London Lord Panmure gave Sir Colin a copy to read. He made no reply; and was asked to take it to Lord Hardinge, the Commander-in-Chief, and give a reply to him. It is delightful to read his account of his interview with Lord Hardinge—how he told him his scorn of Lord Panmure's "flummery." Lord Hardinge tried to persuade him that other officers of high rank had accepted commands under juniors, and instanced his own case in taking command under Lord Gough at Ferozeshuhur. "I looked him straight in the face," writes the honest old soldier, "and said to him: 'My lord, the army in India knew, and every officer and soldier in the whole army knew, that your lordship took that step to save the army, and that your lordship did save the army in consequence. The cases are not parallel.' He made no reply."

But when the Queen asked him to go out, his answer was that already quoted, that he "would serve under a corporal if she wished it." And so he did go out again, for a short time only; and when he finally left that Highland brigade that he had led and loved so well, he took leave of them in words too long to quote, and that we will not mutilate by printing them with

one omitted,—words that stir the soul, and make us love the man who spoke them.

After his return to England he passed a short time in command of the South-Eastern District, and then succeeded the Duke of Cambridge as Inspector-General of Infantry. He refused the command of the China expedition, on the ground, as already stated, of age, long service, and liability to fever and ague, and repented his refusal when he learned that Lord Elgin was to be chief of the diplomatic mission. His time was occupied with his official duties. He was selected for a mission to Berlin to carry the Bath to the present Emperor of Germany; and Oxford conferred on him the degree of D.C.L. at Commemoration.

On the 11th July 1857, when the public mind had been for some little time disquieted by the news from India, he was sent for by Lord Panmure, was told of the death of General Anson by cholera, of the disappearance of 30,000 sepoy from the ranks of the Bengal army, and of generally bad news from India; and was offered the post of Commander-in-Chief in India. He accepted at once, and offered to start the same evening. It was then late in the afternoon. He did start the next evening, having meanwhile arranged for Colonel Mansfield to be brought from Warsaw to be his chief of the staff. Spite of the short time at his disposal, he had interviews with the Duke of Argyll, Lord Panmure, the Duke of Cambridge, and the Queen.

Passing through Paris, accompanied by Major Archibald Alison, his military secretary, Sir David Baird and Lieutenant Frederick Alison, his aides-de-camp, he breakfasted with his old friend Vinoy. At Galle he heard with grief of the

death of Sir Henry Lawrence. At Madras he showed a memorandum of the plan he intended to conduct—viz., the advance of separate converging columns from Madras and Bombay, to combine with his own central movements; and, on the 13th August, he landed at Calcutta, and waited on Lord Canning.

It was just eight years since he had written in his journal, "I am only fit for retirement."

The second volume of General Shadwell's memoir contains not merely an account of Colin Campbell's life, but a singularly interesting and concise history of that crowning phase of his career, with which, to the present generation at least, his name is chiefly identified,—the suppression of the Mutiny in India. Into that history we will not attempt to enter here. It should be read carefully by all who care to know the secret springs of military and political action, at a time fraught with so much of danger and difficulty. We shall only touch briefly on those episodes which will bring into light the character of the man, as formed by nature and by his past experience.

His very first act after assuming command was to write to those upon whom the task of making head against the tide of rebellion was now resting, and to send them words of praise and confidence. He knew, doubtless, the value of that encouragement, for he knew the spirit of a true soldier, and the difference between work done under a cold unsympathetic chief, and under one who not only appreciates good work, but lets his appreciation of it be seen. So to Outram he spoke of the exceeding satisfaction it was to have his assistance; to Colonel Napier he expressed himself as most thankful for his good fortune in having the benefit

of his abilities and sound judgment; to Havelock he wrote of the sustained energy, promptitude, and vigour of his proceedings—of their deserving the highest praise, begging him to convey to the troops his pride and satisfaction at their conduct. And so at once, we may feel assured, he gained a warm corner in the hearts of all these men, and secured their most cordial, earnest support.

Confident in the men sustaining their difficult positions before the enemy in the field, he remained himself at Calcutta, organising the despatch of reinforcements and supplies to the front. Mansfield not having arrived, Alison was his right-hand man; and in everything he had the cordial support of Lord Canning, whose guest he was. The task before him was very difficult. "The great arsenal of Delhi, on which in ordinary times a Bengal army mainly depended for its field equipment, had fallen with all its stores into the hands of the enemy. A similar fate had befallen Futteghur, the seat of the gun-carriage manufactory; and Cawnpore, which was wont to furnish the saddlery and harness for the army, could no longer be looked to for a supply of these articles. Calcutta could do little or nothing to meet the exigencies of the occasion. Rifles, ammunition, guns, gun-carriages, tents, flour, boots, &c., were either not forthcoming or deficient in quantity. For the cavalry and artillery there was not a single horse available, and the local transports had been wellnigh exhausted." Such is the picture given us by General Shadwell of a state of affairs that might well have disheartened any commander. But Colin Campbell was of the stuff that considers difficulties as only made to be overcome. With all

this on his hands, he found time to write letters to all whom it would be useful to keep informed.

At the end of September Delhi had fallen to our arms, Havelock had reinforced the garrison of Lucknow; but still Campbell found himself compelled to remain at Calcutta. By a piece of rare good fortune, which it has often been said saved the Indian empire, the troops destined for the Chinese expedition, with their stores and supplies, were able to be diverted to India; these the Commander-in-Chief sent up by bullock-train, while Greathed marched a force from Delhi to Cawnpore. Before the end of October preparations were completed for the reception of reinforcements from England, and their despatch to the front; and then only did Campbell feel justified in going himself to Cawnpore, where he considered his presence was now needed with the troops. On the 27th he left Calcutta, and on the main trunk road, travelling without escort, narrowly escaped meeting a body of mutineers.

On his arrival at Cawnpore, the necessity for relieving Lucknow forced itself on his attention as his one primary object. He had collected a force for the relief—among them his old friends the 93d Highlanders—a force which he described as high and powerful in spirit and courage, but in numbers deficient. With this force, in face of an army immeasurably superior in numbers, he relieved the garrison, and removed some 600 women and children and 1000 sick and wounded to Cawnpore. Throughout he had kept steadily in view this one object. He resisted the counsel given him to attack the town, resolved to lose not one man more than he could help, in the operation of the relief;

and he did wisely. He would certainly have been delayed ; his losses, heavy as they were, would have been far heavier ; and he would probably not have arrived at Cawnpore, as he now did, just in time to save General Windham from further disaster than that already incurred in the loss of his camp equipage, and forced retreat upon his intrenchment, leaving the city open to the enemy. Once again the Commander-in-Chief wisely waited. Though the enemy was close before him, though his soldier blood must have burned to attack, he would not move till the convoy of women and wounded was well away to Allahabad ; and then, with little more than 5000 men, he attacked and routed 25,000 of the enemy, and in the action and the pursuit captured thirty-nine out of their forty guns. Then, having by the actions of Kalee Nuddee, and the occupation of Futtehghur, cleared the Doab, and established thoroughly his line of communication, he turned his serious attention to the consideration of the next step to be taken.

And here, as the year 1857 was closing, we find for the first time a conflict of opinion between Sir Colin and Lord Canning ; in which, to our mind, Lord Canning showed by far the greater genius. Sir Colin, considering that the siege of Lucknow and subjugation of Oudh would require a force of not less than 30,000 men, advocated the postponement of the siege of Lucknow till the hot season should be over, and proposed to undertake a campaign in Rohilcund. Lord Canning, in a most admirable letter, points out the necessity, from the statesman's point of view, of putting the most important object first—and that object he held to be the capture of Lucknow. Whether the whole of Oudh could

or could not be subjugated, he held that Lucknow, that stronghold of rebellion, should be captured. Once again Sir Colin urged his views. But Lord Canning held firmly to his own, and the Governor-General's decision was final.

General Shadwell wisely prints these letters in full ; and in all his book there is nothing of greater interest. They show Campbell's reasons at this time for temporary inaction, against which the troops were fretting bitterly, and which provoked the angry comments of the press. They afford also, as the biographer truly says, a pattern of the temper in which the interchange of opinions between the civil and military chiefs of a great Government should be carried on ; and it is pleasant to read in Sir Colin's letter to the Duke of Cambridge, following this correspondence, how cheerfully he submits to the superior judgment of the Governor-General. The best proof of his loyalty, however, lies in his active measures as soon as the matter was decided upon—measures taken quietly, silently, and carefully, in consultation with Outram, who was left in command of the corps of observation at the Alum Bagh, and who had defeated the rebels whenever they had ventured out to attack him. He fretted at the delay caused by waiting for Jung Bahadoor—a delay which had Lord Canning's fullest approval from political reasons, anxious as was the Governor-General to see Lucknow fall. But at last the move was made, the siege begun ; and Jung Bahadoor only arrived in camp in time to have his ceremonial visit to Sir Colin interrupted by the news that the Begum's palace had been taken by assault—news which afforded the General the excuse for cutting short the interview, and getting

out of his scarlet coat and cocked-hat, into the working dress in which he is shown in his well-known statue beside the garden of the United Service Club in London.

It was not till the end of the third week in March 1858 that the last opposition was over. Lucknow being entirely in our hands, the Commander-in-Chief was free to turn his attention to the problem how to employ the troops who had been engaged in the siege. Two courses appeared open—the subjugation of Oudh, and the prosecution of operations in Rohilcund. Sir Colin recommended the former, Lord Canning preferred the latter course. The one paramount political necessity, in his eyes, had been the wresting of Lucknow from the rebels; that once accomplished, he could afford to let the rest of Oudh wait. But Rohilcund contained a large friendly population, chiefly Hindoo; and if it were not occupied by troops, and if aid were not thus afforded to the loyal portion of it, Lord Canning considered that we should run the double risk of the Hindoos giving way, or of their succumbing to their stronger Mussulman neighbours. Here, again, Sir Colin deferred immediately to Lord Canning's superior judgment. It was not merely a submission under protest, or a half-hearted acceptance of superior orders: he threw himself heart and soul into his chief's views. His letter on the subject to the Duke of Cambridge is a model of what such correspondence should be; he gives all his own reasons for differing from the course desired by Lord Canning, and adds: "In conclusion, I would beg to assure your Royal Highness that, although the Governor-General and I may not agree in opinion on the points above mentioned, there is not the slightest diminution of the cordial

feeling existing between us, and that I shall carry out his lordship's views with the same earnestness as if they were my own."

The sketch of events, to which we are necessarily limited here, conveys no idea of the interesting nature of this portion of General Shadwell's biography. The letters from and to the Duke of Cambridge, whose kindness of heart is conspicuous in his correspondence, are well worth reading; still more so is all Sir Colin's correspondence with Lord Canning, which takes us behind the veil. General Shadwell's personal intimate acquaintance with the subject of his memoir, and his personal knowledge of the men whose familiar names crop up at every page, give a wonderful charm to his work. We are here in contact with Outram, with Hope Grant, with Mansfield, Franks, Lugard, Walpole, and many others whose names are not less well known. We hear the story of Wolseley heading his company of the 90th in the storming of the Mess-house at Lucknow; of Peel's wound at the Martinière, and subsequent sad death; of Adrian Hope, so dearly loved by his soldiers, killed at the assault of Rooyah. We can almost see the Ghazees swarming down upon the Black Watch at the battle of Bareilly, and being killed to a man in the very ranks of the regiment. And by occasional descriptive touches, Sir Colin himself is presented to us in his simple soldier life. Sharing the bivouac with the men, rather than sleeping in any quarters, before the siege of Lucknow; riding up angrily to reprove a regiment for having attacked and captured a position too soon, and having his words silenced every time he opened his mouth by the hearty cheers of the men for the chief they saw always in the front, till his anger turned to laughter;

working in his shirt-sleeves, or transacting business in his bath, he is always the same—a soldier every inch of him—a thorough man of war.

Some of General Shadwell's stories we have heard told in rather more homely guise than he presents them in. General Shadwell tells us the following :—

“On his return march, a member of his personal staff, a Highlander, and acting in the capacity of body surgeon to Sir Colin, believed himself to be at the point of death, in consequence of an overdose of belladonna administered by the native apothecary. In this frame of mind he sent for his chief to take leave of him. Sir Colin finding his friend, to whom he was very warmly attached, in a very agitated state, caused by the peculiar effects of the poison, endeavoured to cheer him, adding, ‘Don't be alarmed. You have gone through greater danger than this ; and do not be frightened if you see the grave now open to receive you.’”

The surgeon in question is so well known for his courage, Sir Colin's remark that a good soldier was spoiled the day they made a doctor of him is so true, that we are sure he will not mind our mentioning the popular version of the story—which is, that when he sent for Sir Colin, he said, “Oh, Sir Colin, I'm going to dee ;” and that the old chief's answer, not quite so courteous as General Shadwell would have us believe, was, “Then, dom it, man, dee like a man !”

We cannot pause to relate the various operations which ended in the complete subjugation of the mutineers. Our concern is rather with the man. In June 1858, at Allahabad, where he had gone to meet the Governor-General, he received the intimation that the Queen proposed to confer upon him a peerage. There being already a Lord Campbell in the House of

Peers, he chose, at the Duke of Cambridge's suggestion, the title of Lord Clyde. “Of Clydesdale,” was added against his wish, for it was one of the titles borne by the Duke of Hamilton. With customary modesty, he was unwilling to use his title, and would still sign himself “C. C.” or “C. Campbell,” as before, to all his intimate friends, How his friends rejoiced in his accession to honour, and to the substantial annuity which was granted with it, the letters of such men as Outram and Patrick Grant show. They are no mere professions of satisfaction ; they are the genuine words of true soldiers, between whom the truest brotherhood exists, between whom jealousy is impossible. It is no figure of speech when Patrick Grant, whom Lord Clyde had superseded in command, says, “Every soldier will rejoice to see his profession thus honoured through you. For myself, I thank God that you are not only a Scotchman, but a Highlander, and that I am, through my mother, half your clansman.” It is genuine esteem that makes Outram ask him to accept the congratulations “of one whose greatest pride was to serve under you.”

Let those who reproached old “Kubbar-dar,” old “Take-care,” for slowness and what they called his Fabian policy, read his letter of 14th September, to Outram. In justice to Lord Clyde, we must print its concluding paragraph.

“You and I, my dear Sir James, have had the happiness to serve in arms together. We know what can and what ought to be expected from officers and soldiers, and we know also where the limit of their exertions begins. You will serve me very much with your colleagues (on the Council of India) if you will point out from time to time that what may sometimes appear slowness to them is an imperative necessity, which cannot be affected

by sudden or hasty measures ; and that officers who are, to the best of their ability, combating with all their might the difficulties of duty in the field, require all the encouragement which can be given them. A cold expression in high quarters is sure to be carried and exaggerated. The press is bad enough ; but if it gets abroad that their labours are undervalued or sneered at by the rulers of the land, you may rest assured that the troops will at length really fail in the execution of their duty. It is about the only thing which upsets a British officer in the discharge of it."

What men who knew the nature of the task confided to Colin Campbell, and the way in which it was accomplished — what these men thought of his conduct, may be learned from Outram's reply of 20th September.

The Mutiny having been brought to a close by the completion of a two months' successful campaign in Oudh, and the capture of Tantia Topee in April 1859, Lord Clyde proceeded to Simla, and at once, in a letter to the Duke of Cambridge, expressed his desire to be allowed to resign his command. Scarcely was the letter written, when the news of the disaffection among the Company's European troops called once more for all his discretion and moral courage. On the transfer of the Company's army to the Crown, numbers of the men had claimed a free discharge, or a bounty on re-enlistment. Lord Clyde had recommended a concession being made ; the Government of India had objected, and referred the matter home. The law officers of the Crown decided against the claims, and their decision was announced by a Government order early in April 1859. Widespread disaffection resulted. Lord Clyde proceeded to Kussowlie, and communicated with the Governor-General at Calcutta, who decided that

no concession of re-enlistment or bounty was possible, but authorised Lord Clyde to grant discharges. The wise, firm and conciliatory way in which Lord Clyde dealt with the difficulty, was doubtless the result of his intimate knowledge of the soldier, derived from his long regimental experience. He knew that if the men had a fair opportunity of stating their grievances in an orderly and respectful manner, they would be amenable to reason. He felt that at every cost, any armed collision must be avoided. And so he issued an order reminding the men of the proper channel through which they all had the right to make any respectful complaints, appointing special boards of inquiry to hear them, and take evidence, and restoring to duty those men who had been struck off. The men were reminded that officers and civil servants were, like themselves, affected by the transfer of the Company's army and possessions to the Crown ; that their position must be the subject of a careful inquiry ; and that they must give expression to their views in a regular and soldier-like manner. The result was satisfactory. All collision was avoided. There was no open insubordination, though great agitation was evident. An order was issued granting free discharges to all who claimed them ; thousands of men returned home, and by far the greater number re-enlisted into H.M.'s service before quitting the ships that had brought them into the Thames. Lord Clyde's action met with the approval it deserved. His letters on the subject of a local army are well worthy of study.

The exertions of the campaign, and the strain mental and bodily of the last two years, had told upon the veteran General. On his return to Simla, he slackened in his

habit of early rising, he cared less for his morning walk. Severe cold and inflammation of the eyes harassed him; but he thought his continuing a little longer in the command might be useful, and offered to do so if desired. His remaining stay in India was not an idle time for him. He was consulted about the Chinese war; and his experience of that country was of great help to Lord Canning. He inspected many of the chief garrisons, and accompanied Lord Canning in a tour through northern India. In May 1860 he went with the Governor-General to Calcutta, and on the 4th June he embarked for England, having issued a farewell order praising the troops for their valour and endurance, but adding that these alone could not have insured success. "That success," says the final sentence of the order, "was owing in a great measure to your discipline, the foundation of all military virtue, which, I trust, will never be relaxed." Words well worthy of the man whose guiding star had been discipline, whose rule of life had been obedience to duty.

At Madras he received a note from Lord Canning. It shows so well the terms of friendship on which the soldier and the statesman were at the end of two such terrible years of trial, that we must quote a fragment of it, which General Shadwell enables us to produce:—

"Don't forget my two requests, to see my sister, and to sit to Frank Grant in your old blue jacket. The sitting is a serious matter, but I think you will do it for me. . . . And now, once more, good-bye, my dear and valued friend! God bless and protect you! Amongst the many happinesses of returning home, there are few to which, when the good time arrives, I shall look forward with more intense delight than that of seeing you once more."

And now at last the tired old warrior was free for the rest he had earned. The cares of poverty no longer bound him in their iron chain. The father he had supported from his slender means, in those early days when all often seemed dark, had lived to see his son made a peer, but died, at a ripe old age, before his return to England. The sister, who had been the object of his tender solicitude, he could now place in her own home in London; and in the society of his dearest friends, General Eyre and his family, he could "indulge the strong domestic feelings to which he was by nature inclined." Visits to them at Chatham; to his old friend General Vinoy, at Paris; to his former comrade, General della Marmora, at Milan; a charming tour in Italy, among the beauties of the lakes and the battle-fields of Lombardy,—brought pleasant happy hours into his closing years. But the feeling of weakness was creeping on him, and his mind was anxious at times. Even the honours which a grateful country ever pays to the soldiers of whom she is proud, sometimes sat heavily upon him. Still he could shake all this off at times. He attended the Prussian manoeuvres of 1861; he was received by the Royal Family at Berlin, and by the Queen at Windsor; but his one pleasure was the society of his friends, the Eyres, at Chatham.

In the earlier pages of this notice we have dwelt on the bitter struggles with poverty of our hero. He was even now not a rich man—for though he had not only his pay, and the annuity of £2000 a-year given with his title, but the savings of his large salary as Commander-in-Chief in India for nearly three years, during which he had been almost always in the field, he can have had but little capital. With that little let us see what he did. Here

is a note from his journal of January 1862: "I have given so many presents in money during the course of the year, that I find I must discontinue the indulgence of this pleasure for some time to come." Then follows the enumeration of the items—amounting, exclusive of the handsome annual allowance made to his sister, to a total of nearly seven thousand pounds.

In simple pleasures—in the joy of helping those to whom he thought help would be useful, as in his early days such help had been to him—in the society of chosen friends,—the last months of his life were passed. Weakness was growing upon him, and in June 1863 he appeared at Chat-ham, never again—alive—to leave the friends he most loved. The closing scenes, all-reverently told as they are by General Shadwell, it would scarcely become us here to reproduce. They are fitting scenes for the close of so brave and grand a life.

The writer of this notice was once witness of a touching scene in a village hospital, a few days after a great battle. A cavalry trumpeter, whose death was close at hand, sprang suddenly from his bed, seized his trumpet that lay beside him, blew with thrilling

notes the "charge," and then fell back and died. The same spirit moved in Lord Clyde. When the bugle sounded in the barrack square, outside the quarters where he lay, he sprang up and exclaimed "I am ready." Yes, he was ready: ready in life for the call of duty—ready to die as a soldier and a Christian should die. "Mind this, Eyre," he said, "I die in peace with all the world." On the 14th August 1863, while his sister, General and Mrs Eyre, and his faithful servant White, knelt around him, he calmly passed to his rest. Over his grave in Westminster Abbey, is placed a plain stone, with these words:—

"Beneath this stone rest the remains of Colin Campbell, Lord Clyde, who, by his own deserts, through fifty years of arduous service, from the earliest battles in the Peninsular war to the pacification of India in 1858, rose to the rank of Field-Marshal and the peerage. He died lamented by the Queen, the army, and the people, 14th August 1863, in the 71st year of his age."

In that simple record is contained the story of a life that may well afford courage and comfort, in all times of tribulation, to those who feel that in them there is that spirit of which true men are made.

FREAKS OF THE TELEGRAPH.

THE wonders of the telegraph have been sufficiently dwelt on. Its praises have been sung in prose and verse. Dithyrambs have been lavished on the marvellous invention which has enabled man to "put a girdle round the earth," to hold direct converse with the antipodes, and to annihilate time and space. Now, while in no way gainsaying the wonderful nature of the invention, or depreciating its importance and general usefulness to mankind, we may be permitted to observe that these great advantages are not entirely without drawback. The telegraph is not always, or to everybody, the unmitigated boon and blessing enthusiastic admirers have represented it to be. As a messenger, it is distinctly uncertain; and those who have suffered from this uncertainty may perhaps be pardoned if they look with somewhat diminished fervour on the boon conferred upon them. In short, there is to this, as to most questions, another side; and it is with this other side that we propose to deal in the following pages.

We have said that, as a messenger, the telegraph is uncertain. Thereby we mean that—to some extent from causes which we shall hereafter endeavour to indicate—there is always more or less uncertainty attaching to a telegram, both in regard to the length of time it may be on its journey, and in regard to the way in which the wording may be reproduced. Especially on this latter point is it, that there is so much liability to go wrong. Too often some kind of tricky spirit, some telegraphic Puck, seems to preside over the destinies of the telegram, with malicious perversity altering the sense, and seeming to take a pleasure in thwarting Man,

and playing practical jokes upon him.

It might *a priori* be imagined that, though the telegraph must of necessity share the common lot of things human—that of being liable to err—yet no exceptional tendency in that direction ought to exist. So far as concerns the mechanical part of the invention, this is undoubtedly so; the mechanical part rarely fails. Although we have it on the authority of the Postmaster-General, in one of his reports, that on one occasion a party of friends telegraphed that they were "all right," which, owing to a mechanical defect of the apparatus, came out that they were "all tight;" yet, on the whole, errors which arise from defects of apparatus are, we believe, very rare. It is the "personal equation" which has to be allowed for. The human element plays so considerable a part in matters telegraphic, that the human propensity to err finds proportionately wide scope. And this tells in two ways. It applies to him who sends a telegram as well as to the operator who manipulates it. Imagine for a moment what the process is: you, let us say, wish to send a telegram; you write out your message; perhaps you pride yourself on your handwriting (most people do who write indistinctly), but you are not aware how incompletely you form many of your letters, and how easy it is for a stranger to your handwriting to misread some of the words, especially if the indistinct words happen to be names. Hence liability the first to error. The intelligent telegraph clerk (or not intelligent, as the case may be) reads over your message to himself, and reads it, as he imagines, correctly. Not so, however.

One of the words—say “ten”—is written so as to look more like “two;” and he reads it for “two.” The sense of the message is in no way affected, and he does not question the word. Or it may be a name which looks to the clerk more like some other name. Supposing, however, that he reads the word correctly, the chances are great that the clerk who despatches will fall into the very error which the former has avoided. Thus, even in the initial stage there is a great liability to error. This is increased by the fact that telegrams so often have to be written in a hurry; and it is astonishing what mistakes we all make in such circumstances. It is by no means an unknown occurrence for persons to omit to insert the essential word in a telegram; while, we have heard, it is not at all infrequent for them to put down as the address the name of some totally different town from that which they had in their minds, and imagined they had written. But even supposing these shoals avoided, the rocks ahead are many. Each telegraph operator takes down the words as he receives them; and his liability to error is twofold. He may rightly apprehend the words, and yet in writing make one or more so indistinct that when he or another operator comes to transmit the message a stage further, the words are misread; or he may misapprehend the signals sent to him, and thus write down a wrong word. When this possibility of going astray is multiplied, as it often is several times, by the message having to undergo several separate transmissions, perhaps the marvel is that so many thousands of telegrams should go right, rather than that out of the whole number many should go wrong.

In any system of symbols for letters, consisting of such simple elements as the telegraph alphabet

does—viz., dots and dashes—it is inevitable that there should be considerable similarity between the symbols of some words,—a similarity which is, of course, productive of mistakes. We may take it that the Morse system of telegraph symbols, having been adopted universally throughout the telegraphing world, is the best for the purpose that has been devised; and we presume that it is not likely now to be improved upon. And yet there are many words which are so perilously alike that errors in them are sure to recur from time to time. To name but one instance, “bad” and “dead” are composed of the same number of dots and dashes, the sole difference being that there is in “dead” a “space” or pause wanting in “bad”—a difference so slight as to require the nicest perception to distinguish it. We will give the two words in Morse spelling, so as to afford an ocular demonstration:—

Bad = — ^b . . . — ^a — ^d . .

Dead = — ^d . . — ^e . — ^a — ^d . .

It unfortunately happens that uneducated people have a special affection for the phrase, “He is bad,” for “He is ill;” and this phrase, when used in telegrams, thus—“Father is bad, come directly,” gets altered into “Father is dead, come directly.”

The universal adoption of the telephone, should that ever become practicable, would, we fear, by no means do away with the evil. The nature of the errors would change, that is all. They would be such as arise from mishearing; and it is open to question whether they would not be quite as numerous and just as perplexing. Telegraphing is a species of dictation; and any one who has had experience of the way in which, under dicta-

tion of a subject totally incomprehensible to the writer, the most ludicrous mistakes will be made, will not be surprised at the curious freaks the telegraph sometimes indulges in. The only mode in which its Puck-like mischief-making powers can ever be curbed is by the introduction of a universal system of transmitting the identical writing of the senders of telegrams. The only blunders that we then should have to complain of would be our own; and to our own faults we are all inclined to be charitable. But such a consummation is probably chimerical, or only destined for our posterity. There is, indeed, in existence an instrument for sending the original writing by telegraph, but it can at present be regarded only as a scientific toy.

So long as our confessedly imperfect system remains, errors must be expected: but as errors will be numerous in proportion as the sources from which they arise are numerous, anything which tends to diminish those sources must be welcome; and a few suggestions, with respect to the mode of framing telegraphic messages, so that they may not offer unnecessary traps for the unwary operator, will no doubt be acceptable as contributing to this result.

And here we must first combat a popular delusion. It is commonly supposed that brevity is the essence of a telegram, and that the shorter a message can be the better: that if you have a thing to say in ten words, it is better to say it in seven; if you have a thing to say in seven, it is better to say it in five. This appears to be the creed of the general telegram-sender. No doubt, if his sole object be to swell the revenues of the State, his procedure is laudable: but there are other considerations to be taken into account; and if he wishes his telegrams to be rendered in such

guise that they shall be understood *par qui de droit*, he will strive rather to make the wording plain than laconic. Redundancy is of course to be avoided, but too great brevity is equally to be eschewed. Laconic writing, it is to be borne in mind, tends to obscurity; obscurity makes it impossible for the telegraph operator to know when he is sending sense and when nonsense; and if he has no guide as to what he is sending, the chances are at least equal that he will go astray.

There is, no doubt, another motive which weighs with some, and that is the desire that the message should not be intelligible to the officials through whose hands it will pass. But it is short-sighted policy to make the wording obscure, in order to frustrate hypothetical official curiosity. If secrecy is important, it would be better to use a cipher. In the majority of cases, however, the true plan is to take the officials into your confidence, and write your message in such guise that he who runs may read. As an illustration of the ingenuity with which people will express themselves, as if for the very purpose of defeating their own object, we may cite the following: A lady, some short time since, telegraphed, "Send them both thanks," by which she meant, "Thank you; send them both"—(the "both" referred to two servants). The telegram reached its destination as "Send them both back," thus making sense as the official mind would understand it, but a complete perversion of the meaning of the writer. Nothing was gained by putting it in this way; the cost of the message would have been just the same if put differently; and as the telegraph ignores stops, the message as it stood read like nonsense. It happens that "th" is not unlike

"b" in the Morse alphabet; and this, coupled with the fact that "back" seemed to be required as the last word, fully explains the error.

But affectionate redundancy may also offer traps to the unwary. The following telegram was once sent: "Thankful to say little girl born safely; dear mother very nicely, having had a short and easy time." By the substitution of one single letter for another the whole sense was changed. This was how it reached its destination: "Thankful to say little girl born safely dead, mother very nicely," &c. If the reader will imagine that sentence being spelt out to him, he will see that having received the words, "Little girl born safely, dead," no other letter than "d" could present itself to his mind; and so it was with the telegraph operator, who was so fully possessed with the idea of "dead" that he paid no heed to the final signals.

We may roughly classify the different kinds of errors perpetrated by the telegraph into: 1st, Errors which are due to pure guessing—sheer carelessness, we may call it—against which nothing is proof. 2d, Errors closely akin to the first, but in which the first letter or two are common to both words. These can often be obviated by careful wording. In the instance quoted above, if the clearly superfluous "dear" had been eliminated, a mistake, which made the message read like a grim joke, would not have been committed. 3d, There are errors due to the similarity, more or less great, between the signals of different words. Obviousness of meaning will often help to prevent these also.

We will now present to the reader a curious collection of telegraph blunders, illustrative of the three categories we have mentioned. The

names, we need scarcely remark, are in all cases fictitious. The first category, as we have said, consists of blunders of sheer guessing; and these in their turn may be subdivided into two classes: 1st, Those in which the different idea conveyed is an allied or a cognate idea, or a widely different idea; and 2d, Those in which the different idea conveyed is the exact opposite to the original idea. Let us take those in which a cognate or a widely different idea is given. Here we have: "Send three tons linseed oil," transmitted as, "Send three tons linseed meal."—"Please to send us fifteen waggons of Burgie daily till further orders," transmitted as, "Please to send us fifteen tons of Burgie daily till further orders."—"Send us two waiters," transmitted as, "Send us twenty waiters."—"Warmest sympathy to Ellen and yourself in your sad loss," transmitted as, "Warmest congratulations to Ellen and yourself in your sad loss."—"Ask Lady Grantly if Cox can read aloud," &c., rendered as, "Ask Lady Grantly if you can read aloud," &c. "Cox" seems to have rather an unfortunate tendency to be converted into "you," for here is another case of it: "Have just written to Cox to send no more milk," was rendered, "Have just written to you to send no more milk." There is a distant resemblance between the signals for the two words; but clearly in each case the mistake was the result of guessing, the operator setting down what he thought was likely, instead of listening accurately to what was sent.—"Will be at home this evening," was rendered, "Will be at home to-morrow evening." There seems to be a fatality about appointment telegrams. The days of the week are perpetually transformed, and the hours of meeting changed. *Monday* is

changed into *to-day*, and *to-day* into *Monday* or *to-morrow*; *Thursday* is changed into *Tuesday*, and *Tuesday* into *Thursday*; *Saturday* into *Sunday* or *Wednesday*; and so on. It is related that on one occasion an invitation to dinner on *Sunday* was altered to an invitation for *Monday*. The recipient, on telegraphing to know whether "*Sunday* or *Monday*" was meant, had his telegram altered to "*Saturday* or *Monday*;" and the final answer of "*Sunday*" was turned into "*Tuesday*." "Meet me at half-past seven"—a not uncommon time for theatre appointments—often reaches the destinée as, "Meet me at half-past eleven"—the fact being that *seven* and *eleven*, when not distinctly written, are easily confounded. "I shall be at my office at nine," arrives as, "I shall be at my office at one." But these blunders being of a common kind, we need not multiply instances of them. Let us return to our list. "Just received a *salmon* from London," was rendered, "Just received a *balloon* from London"! An order to a butcher ran thus: "Please send me two hind-quarters of lamb for *to-morrow*." This was altered to, "Please send me two hind-quarters of lamb for *dinner*."—"Please come quickly, prepared to sleep. We want you. Bring some *soles*, if possible." The telegraph operator improved this into, "Please come quickly, prepared to sleep. We want you. Bring some *clothes*, if possible." His mind evidently resisted the notion that it could be fish that was to be brought, and "*clothes*" seemed the more likely object of the sender's solicitude. A telegram addressed to a fish-salesman read as follows: "Send ten fresh *hares* as early as you can." This was improved into, "Send ten fresh *soles* as early as you can." Here the idea of asking

a *fishmonger* to supply *hares* evidently struck the clerk as absurd. He therefore used his intelligence (?). In the next case, the clerk clearly did not use his intelligence, or he would hardly have turned a telegram from a lady of title to a waiter: "Come and *wait* to-night. Sorry to give such short notice;" into "Come and *dine* to-night. Sorry to give such short notice." The next is a very ingenious perversion: "*Met John* at Brighton. Train leaves Horsham at 10 minutes past 7." This was rendered, "*Meet train* at Brighton," &c.—"Will leave by train arriving at quarter past *six*," was rendered, "Will leave by train arriving at quarter past, *Thursday*."—"If possible, come up to-morrow *express*," was rendered, "If possible, come up to-morrow *evening*."—"Let my coat and waistcoat be *sent down* to-morrow evening," was rendered, "Let my coat and waistcoat be *in town* to-morrow evening." A husband telegraphs to his wife, "Be *sure* and wrap up warm," &c. It is rendered, "Be *here* and wrap up warm," &c.—"The wedding is at St James's, Piccadilly, house *thirty-nine* Margaret Street; do come." This is rendered, "The wedding is at St James's Piccadilly house *they dine* Margaret Street; do come." The introduction of "Number" before "thirty-nine" would have prevented the blunder. The operator evidently went to sleep between the "th" and "ine," and guessed that "they dine" was what had been signalled to him.—"Your aunt *Kate* died this morning at 20 minutes past 11; will write particulars." This was rendered, "Your aunt *came direct* this morning at 20 minutes past 11; will write particulars." Wide as this is from the original, one sees how the mistake was made. "Kate" has only a

dot and a dash less than "came," and the operator conceiving he had missed them, took "came" for the word intended. This would agree with his notions of what was the likely word. Having thus arrived at "Your aunt came," the next word beginning "di—" pointed to "direct" as the likely word, and down he jotted it. The last three words of the sentence might have shown him to be following a wrong clue, and might have made him pause before committing himself to his interpretation of the message, had he not had a lively experience of sentences which seemed to him the veriest jumbles, but which were in truth the messages as worded by the senders. Indeed the jargon in which many people indulge is quite as like nonsense as the worst results of the telegraph operator's manipulations. A gentleman on one occasion telegraphed to a friend that "he had had a fair passage [across the Channel], but *not a glide*," meaning thereby that it had not been altogether smooth. This out-of-the-way expression fairly beat his correspondent, and it was some time before the latter would believe that those words had been written in sober earnest by his friend, and were not some ingenious perversity on the part of the telegraph. But to return. "Shall be glad to have *bus* to ourselves if you can get one to meet us," was converted into, "Shall be glad to have *you* to ourselves if you can get one to meet us." Here again the last words might have been expected to put the clerk on his guard, and warn him that there must be a mistake somewhere. But we cannot help thinking that a Nemesis was at work to punish the writer for using that most objectionable word "bus." If brevity was his aim, why not write, "We should like an omnibus to ourselves"? This would have even had the advan-

tage of being a word shorter. The next is a very wide guess; the clerk seems to have been "wool-gathering:" "Reduce wool *shirt-ings* one farthing per yard," was rendered, "Reduce wool *estimates* one farthing per yard."—"Meet me at the Peabody statue, Royal Exchange, *precisely* at 2," was rendered by a clerk ignorant or oblivious of topography, "Meet me at the Peabody statue, Royal Exchange, *Piccadilly*, at 2."—"Has Mr Delaporte come to you? Please answer yes or no," was rendered, "*Can* Mr Delaporte come to you? Please answer yes or no."—"Mary *will* be home in the evening," was rendered, "Mary *is ill*, be home in the evening."—"I hope you will be glad to hear your sister has consented to an engagement with *father's approval*." This was rendered, "I hope you will be glad to hear your sister has consented to an engagement with *father's apostle*." Puck must have been in a very waggish mood here!—"All going well; a little *girl* at 7 o'clock this morning," was rendered, "All going well; a little *fire* at 7 o'clock this morning," which must have rather alarmed the recipients, who were expecting to hear of a birth. The blunder was probably due to some one's bad writing. It might, however, have been prevented, if "born" had been inserted after "little girl;" and by the omission of the superfluous word "o'clock," equal brevity would have been attained.—"Come *here* at quarter to five, instead of to Princes Gate," was sent as, "Come *home* at quarter to five instead of to Princes Gate."—"As this is the last we shall see of Jenny for a long while, we had rather not *part* till Friday," was altered into, "As this is the last we shall see of Jenny for a long while, we had rather not *wait* till Friday." The next is to a

doctor about a patient who is unable to leave his room. "We should be glad if you could see Mr Vincent to-morrow at your *leisure*," which was rendered, "We should be glad if you could see Mr Vincent to-morrow at your *residence*." Doctors are particularly unfortunate in their telegrams. One doctor had tidings sent to him that a patient was suffering from "nausea," which was delivered to him as "hensia;" another message mentioned that some one was suffering from *St Vitus's dance*, which reached its destination as "suffering from a *vile dance*." "Meet me at Midland station at 12.50. Wire me to *Knight* if you can't come." This was rendered, "Meet me at Midland station at 12.50. Wire me to *night* if you can't come,"—a blunder clearly due to the awkward construction of the sentence. "At *Knight's*" would have been just as short, and would have avoided the danger. The following is a lively specimen of an operator's intelligence: "We hear there is *sickness* at college," is turned by him or her—for the "telegraph" is of both sexes—into, "We hear there is *examination* at college."—"Will *come home* immediately by next train," was rendered, "Will *you come* immediately by next train," leading the unfortunate recipient to take a useless and costly journey. "Shall be home usual time, my brother's *wife* going to see him," was rendered, "Shall be home usual time, my brothers *were* going to see him." Here, again, one word more would have saved the mistake, viz., "is" after "wife;" and the omission of "my" would have compensated for the insertion of the auxiliary verb. "Send with flowers to-morrow one bridal *and* six bridesmaids' bouquets." This was felicitously rendered, "Send with flowers to-morrow one bridal *wreath*, six bridesmaids' bouquets," the operator being apparently of

mind that a wreath must be wanted for the bride. "I cannot ask you to dinner this evening, as shall be *without cook*," was turned into the following pleasing intimation: "I cannot ask you to dinner this evening, as shall be *with you*," which must have somewhat perplexed the recipient. He was not, however, so cruelly treated as the recipient of the telegram, "Don't *fail* this evening; Lord Dash is coming," which was happily altered into, "Don't *call* this evening; Lord Dash is coming;" or as the lady who sent an advertisement for a lady's-maid to the 'Times,' the last words of which were, "personal character *indispensable*," and who had the pleasure of seeing it printed, owing to some vagary of the telegraph, as "personal character *undesirable*." "Send *no* more corkscrews until I advise you," was rendered, "Send *on* more corkscrews until I advise you," with the result that can be imagined. The foregoing blunders have all, more or less, their comic side; but the three following are of a graver nature. "Your mother is *better*," was rendered, "Your mother is *dead*."—"Peter's *father* dead; should not I go?" was rendered, "Peter's *here* dead; should not I go?"—"Cannot go to the theatre to-night. Baby no *worse*." The last three words were altered into "Baby no *more*." It is a curious fact that "no more" and "no worse" have a decided tendency to become converted the one into the other. Messages conveying the tidings that invalids are no worse, are translated into the intelligence that they are "no more;" whilst announcements that persons are "no more" become news that they are "no worse." In this instance, the words were intended to reassure the husband; but the telegraph clerk, not knowing the circumstances, imagined that they were

intended to explain why the wife could not go to the theatre. By substituting in such a case the phrase "not any worse" for "no worse," the danger might be avoided.

We now come to the blunders of our second category — viz., those conveying the exact opposite to the idea intended. And here, while some part of the fault may occasionally be set down to the authors of the telegrams, we must confess that Puck is revealed in his most mischievous mood. What else can explain the translation of a plain message like "We *can* dine with you to-night," into "We *cannot* dine with you to-night"? Or "We *can* supply the machine you ask for," into "We *cannot* supply the machine you ask for"? Or "They are *unsold*," into "They are *sold*"? Or "Send to Victoria by *first* train," into "Send to Victoria by *last* train"? Or "I hope to see you some time this *evening*," into "I hope to see you some time this *morning*"? Or "Henry is gradually getting *better* ; will write to-night," into "Henry is gradually getting *weaker* ; will write to-night"? Or "Character very *unsatisfactory*," into "Character very *satisfactory*"? Or "Send by first *boat* to -morrow bushel sample wheat," into "Send by first *train* to-morrow bushel sample wheat"? Or "*Added* fifteen," into "*Deducted* fifteen"? Or "Our rooms are *let*," into "Our rooms are *ready*"? while contrariwise "The rooms are *ready*," was turned into "The rooms are *let*"? Or "*I shall be* home to-night for dinner," into "*Shall not be* home to-night for dinner"? Or, finally, "Love to you all. I am very *well*," into "Love to you all. I am very *ill*"?

On the other hand, abbreviations or awkwardly constructed sentences must sometimes share the blame. Thus "Please *not* come," was rendered, "Please *do* come." And this

has happened more than once ; the operator evidently imagining that if "not" had really been intended, the sentence would have consisted of four words, "Please do not come ;" but being assured by his fellow-operator at the other end of the wire that there were only three, he refused to trust to the evidence of his senses, and preferred to follow the light of his reason. The one told him "not" the other "do." He chose "do." "*Don't* come this afternoon," was rendered, "*You* come this afternoon." Here again, though the abbreviation is in itself no excuse for such a blunder, yet the absence of it would no doubt have prevented the mistake. All abbreviations in telegrams are mischievous, but none more so than "can't." It is perpetually being altered into "can ;" and yet, with that perversity for defeating their own objects which too frequently characterises mortals, "can't" seems to be used in almost every telegram in which "cannot" should appear. We hold that it would be only benevolent on the part of the authorities to erase "can't" from the dictionary, so far as its use in telegrams is concerned.

Just as "no worse" and "no more," we saw, had a tendency towards mutual conversion, so "all is over" and "all is well" we find have a similar tendency. Thus a simple announcement, "All is *over*" was rendered "All is *well*." And "Come home to -morrow, all is *well*," was rendered, "Come home to -morrow, all is *over*." These expressions are to be avoided, as it evidently to a great extent depends on the turn of mind of the operator which way they come out. The first operator was no doubt of a hopeful tendency, and thought the message must be of a reassuring character. The second was gloomy, and turned brightness into sorrow. In both

cases the result was equally unfortunate.—We had just now a mistake of “ill” for “well.” Here is another, “Worse news of baby. Come directly. I am *well*. Answer what time to expect you,” which was rendered, “Worse news of baby. Come directly. I am *ill*. Answer what time to expect you.” The juxtaposition of “I am well” with “worse news of baby, come directly,” no doubt threw the clerk off his guard, and led him to imagine the news must all be bad. By writing, “I am well, but baby is worse, come directly,” &c., the sender would have guided the operator’s mind to the real state of the case.

It is astonishing, but true, that of all messages likely to go wrong, none are more so than those consisting of a single word. The brief response “yes” is sent as “no,” the response “no” is sent as “yes.” And this mistake will be made even by operators who have the word plainly written before their eyes, and who, it would therefore have been thought, could not possibly make it. A telegram once consisted of the solitary word “Biscuits.” It came out at the other end “Yes”!

The following mistakes, slight telegraphically, would not be slight to those concerned. — “We will come to-day if you do not telegraph *that* it is inconvenient,” was rendered, “We will come to-day if you do not telegraph, *but* it is inconvenient.” The signals for “that” and “but” are almost identical, the sole difference lying in the spaces or pauses, thus:—

that = $\frac{t}{-} \dots \frac{h}{-} \frac{a}{-} \frac{t}{-}$
 but = $\frac{{}^1b}{-} \dots \frac{u}{-} \frac{t}{-}$

The same applies to the two following: “Burbury address 54 *High Street*, Wantage, leaves London,” &c., was rendered, “Burbury

address is 4 High Street, Wantage,” &c.

54 = $\frac{5}{-} \dots \frac{4}{-}$
 is 4 = $\frac{i}{-} \frac{s}{-} \frac{4}{-}$

“Please to *get* a calf if possible either to-morrow or Thursday, and send it in a cattle-waggon,” was rendered, “Please to *meet* a calf if possible either to-morrow or Thursday, and send it in a cattle-waggon.”

get = $\frac{g}{-} \frac{e}{-} \frac{t}{-}$
 meet = $\frac{m}{-} \frac{e}{-} \frac{e}{-} \frac{t}{-}$

“We have *got* a man,” was rendered, “We have *not* a man.” Here the error was caused by the dropping of a dash.

The last series of telegraphic freaks we intend to lay before the reader consists of errors which have evidently arisen from guessing on the part of the clerk after the first two or three letters of the word have been signalled. Parenthetically we may observe that “expect” and “except,” “decided” and “declined,” are words which often get confounded from this cause. “Send brougham to *Works* this afternoon,” was rendered, “Send brougham to *Workso*p this afternoon;” and this happening in the neighbourhood of Workso

, to Workso

the brougham went. “Have twelve pieces in stock, but they are two *shades*,” was rendered, “Have twelve pieces in stock, but they are two *shillings*.” This error is not uncommon in mercers’ telegrams, telegraph clerks thinking apparently little about colour but much about prices. “Send immediately three bottles champagne to *Granchester*,” was rendered, “Send immediately three bottles champagne to *Grand*-mother.”—“Carriage has arrived. Send *cheque* by afternoon post,” was cleverly rendered, “Carriage has arrived. Send *chaise* by after-

noon post." — "Your *bacon* has been forwarded," was converted into "Your *banker* has been forwarded," the operator probably supposing that "forwarded" was a delicate way of putting some unpleasant news anent the banker, equivalent, perhaps, to "run in."—"I shall be home *towards* evening," was rendered, "I shall be home *to-morrow* evening."—"Shall arrive at 7 o'clock. Shall walk on *towards* Shirley, and you can meet me with the trap," was rendered, "Shall arrive at 7 o'clock. Shall walk on *to-morrow*. Shirley and you can meet me with the trap."—"Sorry I cannot come. *Tom* will meet Mr Beverley as arranged," was rendered, "Sorry I cannot come *to-morrow*. Will meet Mr Beverley as arranged." In these last three cases it will be observed the clerk's mind was so dominated by a sense of time that he could not conceive of any other word in such context beginning "to—" than "to-morrow."—"Please *expect* me on Monday afternoon. I am called away *urgently* in opposite direction," was rendered, "Please *excuse* me on Monday afternoon. I am called away *unexpectedly* in opposite direction."—"The whole of us *except* the babies and nurses start to-day," was rendered, "The whole of us *expect* the babies and nurses, start to-day."—"You will be *excluded* if your contributions are not received by to-night's post:" this, which was apparently sent by some building or benefit society to a lax member, must have rather astonished that individual when he received it in the following terms: "You will be *expected* if your contributions are not received by to-night's post." It was just what he thought he would not be. Another building society telegram read as follows: "You will no doubt remember it was *decided* to meet at the Eagle to-night to discuss rules." This

was rendered, "You will no doubt remember it was *declined* to meet at the Eagle to-night to discuss rules."—"I send two hundred pamphlets this post. Please *despatch* forthwith." The last three words were altered into, "Please *destroy* forthwith." We do not know what the pamphlets were, but we should not be surprised if this freak of the telegraph only somewhat hastened their natural fate. "If haddocks are good, send me one *tun* to-day," was converted into, "If haddocks are good, send me one *turbot* to-day." A telegram began thus: "*Consternation* amongst the grocers," which was rendered in a way which the clerk no doubt thought much more effective: "*Constantinople* amongst the grocers!" A telegram consisted of but one word, "*Engaged*." It reached its destination as "*England*."—"Send my *boots* by first passenger train," was altered into, "Send my *boxes* by first passenger train."—"Please come at once. Bring *Dot* with you to look after Jim." This was rendered, "Please come at once. Bring *doctor* with you to look after Jim."—"Father leaves here by three-fifteen train; let the *children* be at the station," was rendered, "Father leaves here by three-fifteen train; let the *carriage* be at the station."

As we indicated at the beginning of this article, in addition to the risks of contrariety in the sense, there are also risks of delay or of total failure of the telegram, and from a similar cause—namely, mistakes in the signalling of the address. Names are always a great stumbling-block to the clerks, and addresses are composed of names. Most of us have tricks of writing names in any but a distinct fashion; and although the Post-office persistently reminds us, on the forms given to us to write our telegrams on, that the writing should be

plain, this advice, like most other advice, is but too often neglected. Hence many telegrams get altogether astray, sometimes to the not slight discomfiture of those into whose hands they fall, and who, unwitting that any error has been made, forthwith act upon them. It is related that a woman residing in some small street in Manchester once received what appeared to be a summons from her husband to come up to him in London. Very much alarmed, she at once started. On her way she got into conversation with another woman who was in the same carriage, and who she found was also going up to see her husband, who was in London ill. This woman had been expecting to receive a telegram from her husband, and, not hearing, had grown anxious, and had finally set off without the telegram. Further parley revealed the fact that their names were the same; that their husbands' names were the same; that they both lived in the same quarter in Manchester; and it finally transpired that the telegram which had been delivered to the first woman was the very one which the second had been waiting for—the error in delivery having been caused by some such mistake as “Hamilton Street” for “Henrietta Street,”—a mistake very likely attributable to want of distinctness in the writing. Another curious case of coincidence of which we have heard, was that of a telegram addressed, “John Stillingwise, Brookdean, nr. Kirkby Lonsdale,” from Robert Stillingwise, his brother, begging him to come at once to him at a hotel which he indicated, in Leeds. The address “Brookdean” was in some way altered, and the telegram was delivered to another John Stillingwise living somewhere in the neighbourhood of Kirkby Lonsdale. This

unfortunate man, who had not heard anything of his brother Robert for some twenty years, at once started off in stormy, wintry weather, reached Leeds in the evening, and was told by the landlord that he could not see his brother that night, as he was very far from well, and had gone to bed. The next morning he was ushered into Robert Stillingwise's room, expecting to see this long-lost brother, when, to his extreme astonishment and disgust, he found himself confronted by an utter stranger!

These are the drawbacks to telegraphy, which we have dwelt upon here because we think there is not only a humorous but also an instructive side to the picture. The moral of our remarks is, Avoid excessive brevity, and especially obscurity; write every word with the distinctness, not that you would consider sufficient in a letter to a friend, but that you would aim at in writing to an illiterate person. Above all, let there be no doubtfulness about your writing of names. It is true that a strict following of these rules will not insure total immunity,—with such a subtle instrument, nothing can; but you may at any rate guard yourself from a good many risks, and that is much.

Moreover, it must in fairness be borne in mind that although these errors, and many like them, have actually occurred, yet these are picked cases, and must be taken as exceptional and not average instances of the mode in which telegrams are conveyed. If our readers will but remember what we have said as to avoiding certain phrases, and will follow our advice as to distinctness both in the wording and the writing of their telegrams, we shall not have written in vain. They will find that they have comparatively little to fear from the “Freaks of the Telegraph.”

LIGHTER SPANISH POETRY, IN ENGLISH METRE.

ROMANCE.

(QUINTANA : *Poesias Castellanas*, ii. 116.)

*"La niña morena
Que yendo á la fuente."*

FIE upon the nut-brown maiden!
Much to blame she is that, loosing
By the well-spring's side her ear-rings,
Dropped and lost them in the water.
"Just three months ago to-day 'tis
That my lover, ere he parted,
Gave to me those golden ear-rings,—
Padlocks twain to bar my listing
Words of love from other suitors;
And I, careless o'er my washing
Stooping, dropped them in the fountain:
What will say my absent lover?
What but this? 'She's just as others!
They are all alike, these women!'

'Padlocks!' he will say—'no padlocks
'Twas she wanted!—false keys rather
Just to ope the doors to falsehood,
Fickle change, and heartless jilting!
Every comer, every goer
Finds her ears ajar to listen!
They are all alike, these women!'
'Now'—he'll say—'she's happy, doubtless,
Glad to know she needs not meet me
Or on Sunday at the Office,
Or on Thursday in the market.'

He will say—'Her fickle love is
Full of thousand tricks and treasons:
They are all alike, these women!'
'Ah!' he'll say—'she lured, the traitress!
With my trinkets in her tresses,
Some new lover—let him steal them
And the heart's life from my bosom!'

Will he say so?—Then I'll tell him
Flatly that he lies to say it!
We're not all alike, we women!
I will tell him, that his jacket
Of green serge to me is dearer
Than the gold-brocaded mantle
On the shoulders of a Marquis:—
That the love which first I gave him
In my heart is first for ever!

We're not all alike, we women !
 Ay—and tell him that, so long as
 Earth keeps rolling, what I say is
 True, if true he cares to find it.
 Oh ! my eyesight's joy and jewel !
 Cast me off to shame and scorning,
 If I change like other women !”

Note.—I assume this—to which Quintana assigns neither date nor authorship—to be the motive of Lockhart's “Zara's Ear-rings,” familiar to all readers of the ‘Spanish Ballads.’ And I hope I need not say that I have not rendered it with any notion of *rivalling* Lockhart. But many admirers of his charming little paraphrase, who have not met with the Spanish text, may not be uninterested in seeing an attempt made at imitating the severe simplicity of the original.

I know not whether the verses are pure Spanish, or Morisco-Spanish, as Lockhart evidently holds them to be, citing especially the mention of the “Mass” and the “Marquis” as suggestive of a Spanish graft upon a Moorish stock. I confess these lines seem to me to be just as fair evidence of Spanish *origin* as of Spanish interpolation. Without attempting to treat the question exhaustively, I may be allowed to add that *morena*, according to the ordinary dictionaries, means not “Moorish,” but “brown” or “brunette:” that the names of “Zara” and “Muça” are, I think, of Lockhart's own invention: and that Quintana does not place the lines among his specimens of “Moorish” poetry. Be it how it may, the verses are true to nature in the mouth of either Christian or Moslem.

ROMANCE JOCOSO.

(QUINTANA : *Poesias Castellanas*, ii. 153.)

“*Toparonse en una venta
 La Muerte y Amor un dia.*”

Love and Death one day together
 'Neath a *venta's* roof encountered,
 Just a little after sunset
 As the shades of night were deepening :
 Death to Madrid on her journey ;
 Love upon the road to Seville
 Trudged afoot,—his wares, that cost us
 All so dear, upon his shoulders.
 Both, methought, alike were flying
 Haply from the fangs of Justice :
 Since they both alike, by killing
 Other people, get their living.
 Soon as they were housed and seated,
 Love, on t'other curious gazing,
 Found her so exceeding ugly,
 That he could but smile, and smiling

Laughed outright as he addressed her:
 "Ma'am, I own I scarce know how to
 Greet your ladyship,—for, certes,
 One so beautifully ugly
 Never in my life I met with!"
 Death, in fury at the insult,
 To her bowstring notched an arrow,
 Love the like; and both had started
 Out of doors to void the quarrel,
 But the landlord, quick between them,
 With a spit by way of truncheon,
 Forced them to shake hands and friendly
 Come together into supper.
 Fain to slumber in the kitchen
 Were they both—for ne'er a chamber
 Or a bed was in the *venta*—
 E'en the host made shift without one.
 Quivers, arrows, bows were handed
 To the keeping of Marina—
 Strapping wench of all-work, waiting
 On the lodgers of the *venta*.
 Scarce 'twas yet the dawn of morning
 When Love, from the landlord claiming
 Back his arms, and paying duly
 What he owed, prepared for starting.
 But the host, unknowing, gave him,
 For his own, Death's bow and arrows;
 And Love, marking not the blunder,
 Shouldered them and straight departed.
 Death slept later; then, awaking
 Heavy, languid, dull and dumpy,
 Took Love's shafts and, with the weapons,
 All the virtue of their owner.
 Whence it chances, since that moment
 Love goes killing youths and maidens,
 Till it's really hard to find one
 Past the age of five-and-twenty.
 While the arrows that Death looses—
 Whilome fatal to our elders—
 Nowadays but strike to kindle
 Passion's fires in breasts of eighty.
 So the world's turned topsy-turvy:—
 Love, who used to give life, takes it,—
 Death, who used to take it, gives it!

Note.—Students of our dramatic literature will remember that this subject has been treated by Shirley in "Cupid and Death: a Masque," to be found in vol. vi. of the edition of Giffard and Dyce. The scene is there also laid in "a fair house representing an inn or tavern." But the exchange of arrows is not there accidental, but purposely effected by the "chamberlain" of the establishment. He says:—

“ But I have made my own revenge upon him [Cupid],
 For the hard-hearted baggage that he sent me :
 And Death I have served a trick for all his huffing. •
 They think not what artillery they carry
 Along with them : I have [ex]changed their arrows.
 How Death will fret to have his fury cozen'd !
 And how will Love look pale when he shall find
 What a mortality his arrows make
 Among the lovers ! Let the gods look to't ! ”

Of course mischances follow—some serious, some ludicrous ; but things are ultimately set right by a re-exchange. Death is here, of course, male. But Death, in Italian, Spanish, and French, is feminine. Love here addresses Death distinctly as “*Señora*.” I do not know whether there are many, or any, instances of Death being represented as *female* by the painters of those countries whose language makes the word feminine.

I can make nothing of “*guia*” in line 48 ; and, at the suggestion of a Spanish friend, have ventured to read “*guija*.” Quintana gives neither date nor author's name.

REDONDILLA, FROM QUEVEDO.

(QUINTANA : *Poesias*, iii. 238.)

“ *Al infierno el Tracio Orfeo
 Su muger baxó á buscar.* ”

I.

Down into Hell travelled Orpheus the Thracian,
 Just to ask Pluto his wife to restore :—
 On foolisher errand to worser location
 Never, I warrant, went mortal before.

II.

His lute as he twangled, the souls in perdition
 Stood for a moment at ease from their pains,
 Astounded yet more at the madman's petition,
 Than at the harmony breathed in his strains.

III.

Hell's dusky lord, his presumption resenting,
 Passed the worse sentence his law-books contain,
 And, with severity most unrelenting,
 Made him,—poor devil !—a husband again !

IV.

But though, to punish his suitor's fatuity,
 He tied him again to his wife as before,
 Pleased with his song, for his music's gratuity,
 Hinted how quickly to lose her once more.

Note.—This last is in rhyme—as we English understand rhyme. The preceding two are in that assonantal rhythm which satisfies Spanish ears.

VALLOMBROSA.

IN the latter part of last October I found myself in the lower slopes of the Apennines, on the shadowy hills of Vallombrosa. Its very name, which Milton has made familiar to English ears, has a poetic and romantic attraction; and whenever it is pronounced, there rises in the memory his famous simile of the innumerable legions of angelic forms

“ who lay entranced

Thick as autumnal leaves, that strew the
brooks

In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
High overarch'd imbower.”

But of the many who know by heart these magical lines, how few there are to whom Vallombrosa is more than a sounding name—suggesting at best some vague place in the ideal realm of dreams, through whose dense Etrurian coverts of unnamed trees a fine poetic sunlight faintly shimmers, whose dim and shadowy paths and singing brooks are strewn by the ruffling winds of autumn with a wealth of innumerable leaves, and over which there hovers an undefined mysterious charm of unreality! Such at least it was to me before I visited it in the body. Nor did I find the dream those few lines had the power to evoke to my imagination, quite untrue to fact. Nothing could be more romantic, beautiful, and interesting in every way—whether sleeping and murmurous with whispers in the summer and autumn, with shadowy coverts for meditation, or rousing and wrestling with the storm-winds that descend upon it from the higher Apennines and assail its forests with their fury in the winter months. It is never tame or characterless, but silent, wild, lonely, secluded, gentle, or furious, according to the

mood of the season, and responsive to every touch of feeling and passion.

I had been invited by a friend to pass a few days with her and her family in one of the most lonely regions of the large tract which bears the name of Vallombrosa. The once famous convent lies at a distance of about three miles from this spot; and here, in one of the hollows, they had hired an old deserted house, built centuries ago by the Medici as a stronghold and hunting-box, which they had fitted up and put into habitable condition as a summer retreat from the heats of Florence. Originally the house was flanked by two tall towers, and was castellated in form; but within the last few years the present Government, caring little for the picturesque, and apparently seeking rather to obliterate than to preserve the traces of the past, had cruelly and for no sufficient reason levelled the two towers and razed the upper storey: so that the house is now a square unpicturesque but solidly-built construction in stone, two storeys high, and with walls massive enough to resist the assault of anything but modern cannon. Here my friends had made their summer home, far from all society and neighbours, to enjoy freedom, solitude, and the silence and charm of nature. There is no highway to lead the wandering tourist to their doors, and only friends who are willing to brave a long romantic mountain-path practicable but to foot-passengers, or donkeys, or *treggie*, find their way to this solitary spot. These *treggie* are merely the rudest kind of sledge, made of two long solid planks, with a seat midway, which are trailed along the ground by patient slow-moving oxen. No

carriage on wheels could possibly bear the shock and strain of these rough roads, if roads they can be called, which rather resemble the rock-strewn ways worn by mountain-torrents. So one is not liable to morning calls in the latest of Worth's dresses, God be thanked; but the foot-passenger in stout boots and country dress is amply repaid for his walk, whether he come by the way of Podere Nuovo on the north, along a winding path through the woods, or by the monastery on the south, by a road commanding the loveliest and largest views over an exquisite and varied valley strewn with far-gleaming villages and towns, bounded by swelling outlines of hills or mountains, one rising after another against the soft sky. There, far away in the misty distance, can be seen the vague towers and domes of Florence; and through the valley the Arno and the Sieve wind like silver bands of light, through olive-covered slopes and vineyards that lie silent in the blue haze of distance, spotted by wandering cloud-shades, and taking every hue of changeful light from the pearly gleams of early morning to the gorgeous golden transmutations of twilight and the deep intensity of moonlit midnight. Nearer, magnificent chestnuts throng the autumnal slopes, their yellow leaves glowing in the autumn sun. Sombre groves of firs, marshalled along the hillsides for miles, stand solemn and dark. Beech-trees rear at intervals their smooth trunks, or gather together in close and murmurous conclave. The lower growth of gorse, and broom, and brush, and feathered fern roughen the hills, where the axe has bereft them of their forest-growth; and in every direction are wild enchanting walks through light and shadow, alluring us on and on for miles. Here and there columns of wavering blue smoke tower and melt away into the soft sky, where

the charcoal-burners are at work. Little brooks come trickling down at intervals, finding their devious way among the rocks and leaves, and singing to themselves a low and silvery song. Now and then a partridge whirs up beneath your feet, or a whistling woodcock suddenly takes flight, or a startled hare with up-cocked tail may be seen tilting through the underbrush, or a sly fox steals cautiously away. These foxes, which are very numerous, are the bane of the place. They destroy the ground game; and as it would not be possible to hunt them with hounds over this wild and rugged country, they are here merely a pest, and hateful to sportsmen. Were it not for them and poachers (who, indeed, are comparatively few), the game ought to be most abundant; for the whole country is Government property, fairly well preserved by the forest-guards, and none but a privileged few are permitted to shoot over it. Small birds, however, of every kind abound, and the woods are musical all the spring and early summer with their happy song. Here at Vallombrosa itself they are protected against their bitterest enemy, man, and from the unsportsman-like devices of net and snare, which are prevalent elsewhere throughout Italy. But on the confines these are freely practised; and the Government grants to a very limited extent, and for the small annual tax of fifteen francs, the right of snaring by means of the *paretaio*, as it is called. This is a long, low, narrow erection, some six feet high in front, and covered with a roof sloping down to the ground behind. The front is pierced with slits for outlook; and within, the sportsmen, if they are to be honoured by such a name, hide themselves. It is placed generally on open ground, with a square open space before it,

so as to be exposed to the sight of all birds. In this space a number of caged singing-birds are set at intervals, to attract by their song all other wandering birds. On either side of this square extends flat along the ground a framed net, concealed often by brushwood and seeded plants, and connected with the inside of the *paretaio* with cords, by which they are worked. Attracted by the murmur and flutter of the caged birds, gradually all the others in the vicinity gather about the place and descend to the ground—curious, apparently, to investigate the meaning of this strange construction and to make inquiries. When a sufficient number are thus inveigled, the cords are suddenly drawn, and the nets shut instantly together over the space, entrapping the poor unfortunates. Sometimes in one of these *paretaii* a hundred little birds will be taken in a day; and whatever they are, large or small, they go to the spit or the pan, and find a place on the table.

But at Vallombrosa, despite these snares, the woods are enlivened by the song of many a bird in summer: and now, in the mid-autumn, they still echo to the shrill scolding of the jay; the piping of the thrush, blackbird, and chaffinch; and the cheeping notes and trills of the lesser tribes. Squirrels swing from bough to bough, and run up the tall trunks. Grasshoppers flutter about, and spreading their grey shards, show the gleam of blue wings beneath. And there is busy insect-life swarming, buzzing, and whispering everywhere in the woods. If one could only know what they are saying! "To one who has been much in city pent" it is a pure delight, on bright autumnal days in late October, to wander through the woods and along the hillsides of Vallombrosa, vaguely, without object, dreaming,

listening, at one with nature; now climbing through the tangled gorse, up steep rugged declivities, or lingering where the roaring torrent dashes down its turbulent sheets of foam; now following the track of some mountain stream through beech-groves; now lying at rest under some golden chestnut—whose spiny burrs, showing the dark and polished nuts within their cloven husk, strew the rough grass underneath—and gazing out over the rolling distance below, so silent and lovely; now treading the brown soft carpet beneath the tall columnal firs, whose serried masts rise thickly, climbing to the light, and swaying to the breeze, and whispering to it unimaginable secrets beyond our sense to catch.

On either side of the house are silent cathedrals of firs, into which one can enter almost with a step. The summer sun pierces not through their summits; but all is cool and shadowy, and filled with a sort of dim religious light. Straighter pillars never were raised to heaven, and finer murmurs of aspirations never were heard in any human church. What do they long for, these ever-whispering firs?

This is the country in summer days, or in the quiet days of sunny autumn; but it has its wilder days of passion and tempest, when the gale sweeps down the clefts of the Apennines, and plays a stormy music on the wondrous harp of nature. Then the whole forest roars in answer to its call, and groans and quivers in its every fibre, and rouses and wrestles with this great invisible power, and shakes abroad its tumult of leaves, and lashes to and fro its branches; and the blast with its stormy trumpeting comes up the cloven defiles, and strikes the bare vast slopes of the shorn hills, and, roaring for battle, sweeps thundering

down the valley, crowding before it a tumult of cloud and mist; and from above the heavens themselves respond with their dread artillery; and fierce and swift, the lightning plunges its quivering blade into the earth, and strikes at random into the woods, and a great crash is heard as some tall leader of the forest falls.

Well housed, then, in our solid house, we listen to it as it roars without, and beats and howls at the windows, and lashes with gusts of rain the streaming panes, and threatens us vainly as we sit before our wide chimney, heaped with logs that the storm itself hath shaken for us to the ground; and watch the tongues of darting, passionate fire leap up the black throat of the chimney, to join the stormy rout; and every now and then stop in our talk to listen, half in awe. The Spirit of the Apennines is then worth communing with. It has many a wild thing to say that it is well for us to hear—better than gossip of the city; and where can one hear it better than here in the heart of Vallombrosa?—

“When the Apennine walks abroad with the storm.”

Then comes the winter. I shall be gone then; but the poor peasants will stay, and hear what that has to say, when all the world about is covered with its snowy shroud of silence, and far off the valley smiles, like the happy valley of Rasselas; and they will crowd about their great black-throated chimneys, rough with soot, where blazes their fire of chips and broken brush, and branches gleaned from the wrecks of storm in the forest, and wish

and wish, and want, and sigh, and suffer. To me it might have other things to say; to them it speaks of poverty, of suffering, of hunger, of no work, and, finally, of patience. This is the only flower, perhaps, which will grow for them in winter; and it is at once one of the most precious and one of the most common flowers that grows in Italy—*pazienza*: and, poor things, they have need of it here in Vallombrosa. The wonder is to me to see their patience and their cheerfulness under the load they have to bear.

A beautiful walk of about eight miles carries us from our lonely house, through exquisite passages of scenery, through golden chestnut-groves and solemn fir-forests, to the ancient monastery of Vallombrosa. The road commands through its whole course the valley of the Sieve, and the rolling hills that swell and sink and rise again in ever-varying lines and masses, like the heaving of the billows in mid-ocean, and reaching far away to the horizon. Thousands of wild flowers smile along our path. The silver-tufted wild clematis climbs the shrubs. The spiring broom clusters everywhere. The wild rose, wearing now its coral hips, stretches and gropes about in the air. Daisies and buttercups, purple scabias and pale pansies, delicate blue-bells, the pale-purple malva, white broad-faced hemlock and silvery thistles, golden arnica, autumnal cyclamen, blue corn-flowers, St John's wort, and, in a word, all the common people of the wild flowers, enamel the rough sward. Here, too, long after the summer has passed, still hides in the grass the wild strawberry, for which Vallombrosa was famed of old.* At

* “*Et vaga prata ferunt æstu redolentia fraga*,” says Æmylus Acerbus, in his panegyric of San Giovanni Gualberto.

last we come to a small rill, which, tumbling over a rugged shelf of rocks, goes its way through a cleft of dark pines down into the plain. This is the Slato del Diavolo, so called; for, as the legend goes, here the good saint Giovanni Gualberto was pursued by Satan, who caught him in his claws and cast him down the declivity. But it is difficult to kill a saint, and he fell unharmed into the valley.

We now descend through a deep dark defile of pines, where the sunshine even at high noon scarcely penetrates, save here and there to freckle with spots of light the brown damp carpet, a place that recalls that "deep romantic chasm" of Kubla Khan, "which slanted"

"Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover,—

A savage place, as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was
haunted

By woman wailing for her demon-lover."

Again climbing, we see before us the noble old monastery—placed as only the monks knew how to place a building, and commanding one of the most magnificent views that can be found even in this beautiful Italy. On one side the sloping hills are dark with miles of serried firs; on the other, they are golden-brown with glowing chestnuts; and above, forests of beeches lift their smooth trunks and climb the mountains. On a flat terrace, in the midst of all this, stands the monastery, a huge square building with inner courts, in the centre of which is the church, with its square tower lifting itself above the mass in the sun. In front is an enclosed court, laid out as a garden, and within a wall; and passing out from this through the gateway, we come upon a large enclosed basin of purest water, fed by a perennial and gushing stream, in which the monks of

old kept their preserves of trout in prosperous days. Still beyond are walks through alleys of trees; and on the left, about five hundred paces from the gate, is a fountain which was once thought to possess miraculous powers of healing. "Fontis hujus aqua contra diversos dolores corporis est attributa: ibi blanda medicina confertur, sine tormento cura, sine horrore remedia et sanitas impunita," says Cassiodorus (*Variarum*, lib. ii. cap. 39). Such was the number of miracles performed by this fountain, that for centuries it was visited by pilgrims, and was held holy, somewhat as the waters of Lourdes are to-day, though by a far more limited number of believers.

Here at this fountain San Giovanni Gualberto, the founder of the monastery, journeying from Florence alone in search of some retired hermitage in which to hide himself, paused one summer's day in the year 1008. He was of one of the most noble and ancient families of Tuscany—his father, Gualberto Visdomini, claiming to come from the royal race of the Carolingians (the first of his family having been created *cavaliere* by Charlemagne), and his mother being an Aldobrandini, of the direct line of Hugo, Duke of Tuscany. Indeed, according to the historian Pietro Monaldo, his ancestry went much further back, even to the times of Catiline, from whom he directly descended. After that famous conspiracy of ancient Rome was foiled by Cicero, and its chief was driven from the city, two *congiunti* of his came to Umbria, and there established themselves. The one who came to Florence took the name of Visdomini, and was the ancestor of San Giovanni. The young Giovanni was brought up in the exercise of arms, and received the education of a gentleman. He was

naturally of a fiery disposition. His early manhood had been given to wildness, worldliness, and dissipation at least, if not debauchery, and his conversion to a monastic life was sudden and remarkable. One of his friends, also a Visdomini, in a violent quarrel with his brother Hugo, lost all command of himself, and in a sudden fit of passion plunged his dagger into Hugo's breast and killed him on the spot. Giovanni, furious at his assassination, swore to avenge it. Visdomini fled, and for a time Giovanni pursued him in vain; but at last, on the morning of Good Friday, in the year 1003, as he was going escorted by his body-guard to Florence, they met in a narrow pathway in the forest, escaped on either side with high rocks, where there was no escape. Drawing his sword, Giovanni told him to prepare for instant death; but his opponent, instead of defending himself, dropped on his knees, and spreading out his arms and hands in the form of a cross, besought Giovanni to remember the day, to spare his life, and to grant him that mercy which otherwise he himself might vainly sue for in another life. Something there was in the mode of his prayer, and the expression, tone, and attitude of the man, which seemed to have touched to the quick the sensitive spirit of Giovanni, and operated an instant revolution of feeling and purpose. He forgave him on the spot, assisted him to rise, and dismissed him in safety with his blessing. He then at once repaired to the neighbouring monastery, at San Miniato, and there prostrated himself before a crucifix in prayer. As he gazed up, the figure of Christ bent his head to him, as if in approval of his act of clemency. The miracle so affected him that he at once went to the abbot, solemnly abjured his former life and courses,

and begged to enter the confraternity as a brother monk. The abbot at first refused to receive him, fearing the rage of his father, but finally consented, and Giovanni then took the religious vows in April 1004. From this time forward he was no longer the same man, but distinguished himself by his humility, piety, and devotion to his new calling, and soon acquired so great a reputation and influence, that on the death of the abbot in 1008, he was unanimously chosen to take his place. This office, however, he could not be induced to accept, declaring himself, in his humility, to be unfitted for it in any way—by all his previous life, by his personal wishes, by his general incapacity to guide others—and stating that his own desire was rather to seek some peaceful and solitary hermitage, where he might spend his life in silent self-communion, in prayer, as a hermit afar from men and from the possibilities of ambition. Filled with these sentiments, he soon after left the convent, and wandering forth on his solitary way from Florence, ascended the lonely hills of Vallombrosa. Here, weary and thirsting from his hot walk, he stopped beside the fountain which afterwards acquired such celebrity: the cool waters refreshed him; and enchanted by the magnificent prospect which opened before him, he here determined to stay, persuaded that this was to be the end of his wanderings, to which the hand of God had led him. The forest gave him shelter and food sufficient for his wants; the cool clear spring poured its perennial waters for his drink; and against the fear of serpents and wild animals, which then infested the woods, he found a defence in prayer. In the neighbourhood were two hermits named Paolo and Guntelmo, who had here

established themselves, and were living in two miserable huts. These joined him almost immediately; and little by little, though against his will at first—for he desired rather to live in solitude—there gathered about him a small company of monks and hermits. They built a series of rude huts for shelter—in front of each of which was planted a cross, to conjure away demons and wild beasts—erected in the centre a place of prayer, and enclosed the whole with a circular wooden paling. Among the enemies which surrounded San Giovanni, or which he imagined to surround him, were wild beasts and demons; but his most serious and palpable foes were the bands of robbers who here found refuge, and who did their utmost to drive him thence by threats and assaults. The little community were beaten cruelly at times, their huts were torn down, and death threatened if they remained. But all was vain. They made no defence, suffered in silence, prayed for their enemies, returned good for evil, fed them in want, tended them when ill, and finally thus overcame them, and were left in peace.

The fame for sanctity of their leader—or prepositor, as he was called at first—spread throughout the land. The nobles of the surrounding country gave him aid and protection, granted him lands, and advanced him means to build a church. The Emperor Conrad II., with the Empress Gisela and all the Court, paid him a visit, and, touched by the piety and poverty of the little community, made them large presents. Gifts and grants of land poured in on all sides. Among the chief donors may be mentioned specially the Abbess Itta (head of the convent of St Hillario); the Counts Guidi, who were the direct descendants of Otho I., and the

principal owners of the land thereabouts; afterwards the famous Countess Matilda, who conferred special honours and grants upon them; and the republic of Florence, which not only remitted all taxes upon the monastery, but also gave lands and favoured it in every way. The place was then called Acquabella and Acquabuona, and it was not until long after that it received the name of Vallombrosa. The life led by the monks was half claustral and half eremitical, and their penances and self-inflicted privations almost intolerable. At times they scarcely ate anything, reducing themselves to the point of starvation, and treating even a drink of pure water as a luxury not always permissible. One loaf of bread a-day was divided among three; and often this was made simply of *crusca*, the husks of the grain: and when this was wanting they lived on roots, and wild herbs, and nuts, and whatever they could pick up in the woods. But these penances, they at last found, were beyond human strength and resistance, and they came to the conclusion that God could not require of man more than man could bear. Still they practised extreme abstemiousness, strove in every way to drive out the demon of desire, that, despite their utmost efforts, would possess them, and endeavoured to be chaste, virtuous, and unselfish. Above all, they practised hospitality from the very first, devoting themselves to good offices for the poor, and administering all their means to the succour of the miserable and suffering. One of their penances was to plunge their feet in ice-cold water, and there keep them till they were nearly frozen. And thus, with prayer, reading holy books, fasting, working on the ground, and tending the sick, they passed their lives.

Finally, they adopted the complete ordinances of the Benedictines.

The benediction of God, they thought, was manifested to the prepositor, San Giovanni, by a fact they considered miraculous. The tree which grew beside his hut, anticipating the ordinary season, put forth its leaves long before all the others; shaded it during the summer with its abundant foliage; and was the last, when winter came, to shed its leaves on the ground. This was repeated year after year, and was considered a miracle, so that a wall was built about the tree, and it was consecrated and held in highest reverence. This tree was in the year 1008 full-grown; and in 1640, when Diego de Franchi wrote his 'Life of San Giovanni Gualberto,' it was still flourishing, and a print of it is engraved in his biography, surrounded by a wall, and with an inscription. What is supposed to be the same tree, surrounded by a wall corresponding in appearance to the old print, is still living and flourishing after these many centuries.

The monastery grew in numbers and in fame; and the Countess Matilda, in addition to her donations, conferred upon the prepositor or prior—or abbot, as he finally was called—the title of Count of Mag-nale,—the same title to pass to his successors. These donations were confirmed in 1210 by the Emperor Otho IV., who took the convent under his special protection, and gave the title of Marchese di Monteverde to the prior. The original hermitage (Eremo), as it was called, was built in 1043; but as time went on, it was repeatedly enlarged and rebuilt. In the fifteenth century the cloisters were increased and a new church erected; and finally, in 1640, the façade, as it now appears, was added under the pastorate of Don Averard Niccolini of

Florence, and the church and monastery enriched by pictures, statues, codices, engravings, and a large and valuable library.

Undoubtedly there might have been something to fear from the beasts of prey, wolves, and serpents with which the forest then abounded, according to tradition; but besides these, the saint himself declares in a letter—and in this he is upheld by various writers of the period—that terrible voices were heard at night all around them, which they held to be voices of demons, and phantasms of the Evil One; and even a fierce dragon and basilisk threatened their lives. But all these were quelled by prayer, as they were probably evoked by the excitement of the brain and nerves occasioned by too prolonged abstinence from food. The penances and privations of the saint himself were carried to such a point that he was subject to constant fainting-fits, to syncope, and even tetanus, so that his teeth were locked together, and he could only be relieved by prising them apart with a knife, and administering some stimulants. In such a state it is easy to account for all these visions, which were then held to be devilish temptations. More efficacious than his prayers, seems to have been the more generous diet which at last he was forced to take,—con-
descending under great pressure to add to his nourishment a few ounces more of food, and at times to partake of something cooked, and even to take a fomentation of wine—inasmuch as the Apostle permitted a little wine for the stomach's sake.

The great precepts of the monastery which San Giovanni preached and ordained, were charity and hospitality. In process of time the monastery grew rich with the many donations of the pious, and was enlarged, and increased in influence

and in numbers. A hospital was then established for the sick, and for the poor, where medical aid was given and food supplied to those who were in need and suffering. All charities and donations they accepted in trust for those who were ill and poor; and, as it would seem, these were administered in a thoroughly Christian spirit, so that the poor and sick of all the country about blessed these monks. Besides this, in the way of hospitality they gave free lodging and food to all honest travellers or visitors for three days. The fifth part of all their revenues they devoted to the hospital. The laws of their order not permitting women to enter the monastery, they built a house expressly for them, for both sick poor and visitors, where all the obligations of charity and hospitality were performed. So the monastery became celebrated everywhere, and every one sang its praises. Vallombrosa, says Ariosto—

“Vallombrosa, così fù nominata una
Badia

Ricca e bella nè men religiosa,
E cortese a chiunque vi venia.” *

For their motto they had, says De Franchi, “Obedience to one’s elders, community of life and property, concord between the brothers, and love to one’s neighbours.”

¶ Besides keeping up the monastery at Vallombrosa, the Abbot San Giovanni applied the revenues of this property, which had now become very large, to the erection and establishment of a number of other monasteries under similar regulations, and of restoring still others which had fallen into decay. The utmost efforts of the abbot were specially directed against simony, and to insure decorum and honesty of life and doctrine. Despite his ill-

health, he travelled much in search of good works to do, and to succour the poor. “*Præcipuus paupertatis amicus*” was the title given him by the writers of his time. “Well though he knew that riches are thorns” (*spine*), says De Franchi, “and that it is far better [easier?] to be without them than to fitly employ them, he ever feared, although his brethren monks held them in common, that their hearts would be impelled by them to courses averse from peace and purity. Therefore he resolved to deprive them of a portion of their riches, reserving only what sufficed for a tranquil and a happy life, and thus blessing, with the gifts that they had received from the laity, the laity and the people. In order to supply the wants of the needy, he laboured himself with his old and infirm body to cultivate the land and the gardens around, thus setting an example to all other monks, and would not allow his own monastery to have riches which were not used in common and with humility of spirit.” *O si sic omnes!* Well may we cry with De Franchi, “*O vicissitudine delle antiche virtù! O vestigie smarrite!*”

Plague and famine, and earthquake and tempest, at this time came upon Italy, and San Giovanni made a tour of visits to the various monasteries subject to his authority, to see that the hospitals were well furnished, and open to all who needed aid, reproving severely those in which he found a surplus of provisions set aside, and praising those wherein the monks had exposed themselves to suffering in order to expend their utmost means in charity. “*Cur, inquit adeo abundamus, cum multos egere videamus?*” To these noble senti-

ments and acts the world responded, and the more that was given away, the more was brought to his door. One day the monks found themselves without anything to eat except three loaves of bread. By order of the abbot a sheep was killed, and the meat was placed on the table. But all refused to eat of it, and satisfied themselves with the crumbs of bread that remained. The next morning, a number of sacks of corn and grain, and other comestibles, were brought to their gate, and the drivers would say nothing but that it was a gift, sent by gentlemen whom they would not name. The gates of the monastery were then surrounded by the poor, and everything was given. On another occasion, when the failure of the harvest had brought much suffering to the poor, he ordered the granaries of the monastery of St Salvi to be opened, and every one who was in need to be supplied to the last grain. In another season of famine he sold all the sacred vases and utensils of the church, and all the priestly ornaments and dresses, to give their proceeds to the hungry. I give these particulars to show the spirit which animated this noble abbot; and between then and now the reader himself may make the comparison, and see how far we have improved on his administration.

Many are the miracles attributed to San Giovanni, but these we will leave aside. The great miracle was the goodness of the man, and the noble work he did. In the year 1073 he died, at the good old age of eighty-eight years.

The same spirit continued to govern the monastery, and his memory and precepts were held in highest honour and reverence. The monastery flourished, and grew in wealth and territory until it possessed a vast country, rich in pasture and forest,

keeping up its reputation for charity and hospitality, and affording asylum and sustenance to all the poor who came to its gates. The land was well cultivated; the willing labourer always found work there; and many were the pilgrims who visited it from all parts of Europe, to all of whom it accorded a generous hospitality. Here, among others, came Milton, in the flower of his youth, to gaze on this magnificent panorama, to store his mind with images and pictures — that long remained vivid when the outer windows of his sight were closed — to study in the library, to pace the terraces, to ponder the grand poem of his later years, and to leave behind him a memory dear to all who love English poetry. The landscape is still the same as when he saw it, and the leaves strew the hillsides as thickly as when he wandered among these shady groves. His shadow walks with every English traveller through the long corridors, where once the monks who are now but dust listened to his silvery tones, and wondered perhaps at this fair youth, with long and golden hair, who came from a far-away country, and spoke softly if brokenly in their native tongue. The charm of this place long lingered in his mind, and he apparently drew upon it for his description of Paradise in his great poem. Already, while pacing these cloisters and woods, he was meditating an epic work, the theme of which was the history of King Arthur and his knights; and in a Latin poem addressed at this time to his friend Manso, Marquis of Villa, he thus alludes to it:—

“Si quando indigenas revocabo in carmina reges,
Arturumque etiam sub terris bella moventem!
 Aut dicam invictæ sociali fœdere mensæ
 Magnanimos Heroas; et, (O modo spiritus adsit)
 Frangam Saxonicas Britonum sub Marte phalanges.”

This, however, gradually faded from his mind, and gave place to the loftier and grander theme to which he afterwards dedicated his great powers. The impression made on his mind by Vallombrosa never left him; and perhaps it was the memory of this lovely landscape, with Florence in the distance, which rose before his blind eyes when he wrote these lines:—

“As when a scout
Through dark and desert ways with pain
hath trod
All night, at last by break of cheerful
dawn
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing
hill
Which to his eyes discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen, or some renowned metropolis,
With glistening spires and pinnacles
adorn'd,
Which now the rising sun gilds with his
beams.”*

Among the other memories attached to Vallombrosa is that of the monk Guido—commonly called Guido d'Arezzo or Aretino—to whom we owe the modern method of notation in music, the ordination of the gamut, the arrangement of notes in lines and spaces, and the names *ut*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *sol*, *la*, which he first gave to the notes, and which they still retain. Whether he actually resided here is open to doubt. Very little is known accurately in regard to his life. The dates of his birth and his death are only proximately established; but he is believed to have been born towards the end of the tenth century—in or about 995. It also seems to be established that he was a monk of Pomposa, and abbot of some convent,—whether at Camaldoli, Val-

lombrosa, Sta Croce d'Avellana, or elsewhere in Italy, Germany, Normandy, is questioned: all claim him. If he resided at Vallombrosa, it must have been in the very early days of that monastery, since the original Eremo was only built in 1043, and towards the latter part of his life. But whether or not he was here in fact, here he is in tradition at least, and his memory is associated with this place; and here we may fancy him walking through the forests, meditating his musical scheme, and chanting the hymn of San Giovanni, from the first syllables of which he took the names which he gave to the musical notes:—

Ut queant Laxis,
Re-sonare fibris,
Mi-ra gestorum,
Fa-mula tuorum,
Sol-ve polluti,
La-bii reatum,
Sancte Joannes.

Here also—under the shadows of these trees, and along these hills—might once be seen the august figures of the famous Countess Matilda, the Empress Gisela, the Abbess Itta, the Countess Ermellina; of the Emperors Conrad II., Henry III., and the third and fourth Othos; and long afterwards, Lorenzo the Magnificent—of the Popes Victor II., Alexander II. and IV., Innocent II., Pascal II. (all of whom were monks of Vallombrosa), Leo IX., and many another Papal figure; of San Pietro Igneo, who here underwent the ordeal of fire, and passed unharmed through the flames; and Beato Tesoro Beccaria, the martyr; and San Torello, and San Benedetto, Uberto of the royal blood

* See also 'Paradise Lost,' Book iii. 543, Book iv. 135. So, too, he recalls this spot in his "Epitaphium Damonis," where he says—

"At jam solus agros, jam pascua solus oberro,
Sicubi ramosæ densantur vallibus umbræ;"

or where he speaks of "Flumina, fontesque vagos, nemorumque recessus," in the same poem, his friend Carlo Deodate being the Damon of the poem.

of the Longobards, and many another priest and monk of note. Here, too, lived the distinguished botanist Buono Faggi, and Father Hugford, the English Benedictine, who, in the last century, revived and improved the art of imitating marble in scagliola, and specimens of whose skill still hang on the walls of the monastery; and (as tradition says) Mattio Bandello, the author of the famous *novelle*, that rival those of Boccaccio—at least in their looseness, if not in their style; and here, too, wandered often Christofano Landini, who wrote the celebrated comments on Dante; and Francesco Berni, coming from his native town of Lamporecchio, meditated those humoristic and sarcastic poems that gave his name in Italy to all similar compositions.

For eight centuries this monastery flourished, and to a certain extent at least preserved its high reputation for charity and hospitality. But in the beginning of the present century a sad change came over its fortunes. The first bolt of doom fell upon it when Napoleon in 1810 swept away with a rude conquering hand the right of ecclesiastical property, confiscated most of the conventual houses, seized their possessions, and drove the monks forth to seek what refuge they could in the world. Vallombrosa was not excepted from his ban. The monastery and church were despoiled of their treasures. Its large domains were seized, and the monks themselves were forced to abandon the asylum which had been the home of their order for centuries. After the fall of Napoleon, when Austria resumed its sovereignty in Tuscany, they were reinstated as far as possible by Leopold in their rights and possessions, and again returned to the monastery. A considerable portion of their lands had, however, in the mean-

time, been sold, and passed into the hands of other proprietors, and this could not be reclaimed. Still a large part of it remained, and this again became theirs. Their return was welcomed by all the neighbourhood, and especially by the peasants and the poor, who all had felt the benefit of their charity, and many of whom had earned their living by labour on the land. They administered the property well, and the large profit it yielded seems to have been devoted to good ends. The poor and disabled found always at the convent-doors their soup and bread. The able-bodied were hired to work in the fields, to tend the cattle and herds, to cut the trees, to gather the dead wood or the fruits of the forest, and thus they earned a fair living. If ill, they were taken care of, and found beds in the hospital, and fitting medicines, free of expense.

The number of monks was in later times about 150, varying a little from year to year. Their lives were not as empty as the lives of most monks are; for besides their religious exercises and their studies, from which latter no particularly valuable literary results seem to have been derived, they had other outdoor duties and amusements to occupy their time and their minds.

Mounted on their donkeys or the small nervous horses of the Maremma, they made their rounds of the woods and fields to superintend the farms, the forests, the herds; or with their guns on their shoulders, and accompanied by their dogs, they pursued the game with which the place abounded.

The austerity of the early days declined as time went on, though the strict rules of the order were kept. One particular penance, however, they always continued to practise. This was to rise at one

o'clock every morning, and go from their cells to the church, there to recite their prayers. The monks were genial and kindly to the peasants, and to all with whom they had intercourse, and they were universally liked. The scandal is—and it may be nothing but scandal—that they did not all observe very strenuously the strict laws of that chastity which in earlier days was enforced; and it was the belief that they were the fathers of many of the children in the neighbourhood, particularly in the little village of Tosi. Whether this be true or not, it did not at all embitter their relations with the fathers, husbands, or brothers: all was certainly taken in good part, and if anything was to be forgiven, it was forgiven and smiled at. Certain it is, that whatever of this kind may have occurred, it was quite exceptional to the character and habits of the main body of the brothers, who led a simple dignified life, and were anything but idle and useless members of society. Besides all the rest of their duties, they occupied themselves in public instruction, and founded at the monastery a seminary or college for the education of young men of rank. The Rev. John Chetwood Eustace, in his 'Classical Tour through Italy,' who visited the convent in the early part of this century, about the year 1810, characterises this seminary as "excellent."

"Many of the Florentine youth of rank," he says, "were there at the time of our visit. Their dress is a black gown with a black collar lined and edged with white. We were present at one of their amusements, which was the Calcio or Balloon, a game of great repute both in Italy and France. Their looks and manners seemed to display the advantages, both physical and moral, of the situation."

The old belief of San Giovanni and his brother hermits as to the

wild beasts, basilisks, and demons that haunt the place, does not, apparently, seem to have entirely died out even at the period when Mr Eustace paid his visit to the monastery. One of the "good fathers," in conversation with him, told him that "during the winter, which commences here in October and lasts till May, they were buried in snow or enveloped in clouds, and besieged by bears and wolves prowling round the walls and in the forests. '*Orsi, lupi, e tutte le peste*,' was his emphatic expression." I am afraid the good father drew largely on his imagination, or on the credulity of his listener, in these statements. I have just been in Vallombrosa in late October, and never was there a scene more enchanting and genial. The leaves were thick on the trees, and the country smiling with flowers. As for the *orsi, lupi, e tutte le peste*, I saw none, I heard of none,—unless the good father considered women as coming under the last classification, and the Government guards under the first, and mistook the foxes for wolves.

Before the monastery was despoiled it possessed a remarkably interesting library, containing a considerable number of rare and valuable ancient manuscripts, and rich in ecclesiastical works. These, however, were piled pell-mell together and carried away exposed in carts, some here, some there. Many, of course, were lost; but what remains of them are now deposited among the national archives in Florence. Their paintings, some of which were of rare excellence; their treasures of plate; their elaborately embroidered vestments and altar-cloths; their sculptured figures in silver or terra-cotta, among which were some admirable bassi-relievo by Luca della Robbia,—were all taken, and the greater part of them

carried to Paris or sold.* Their museum of mineralogy, which, for the period and place, was considerable, was not only scattered, but the specimens they had collected were thrown away by the roadside or in the woods as of no value, and even to the present day they are occasionally unearthed. Their pharmacy, which was celebrated, was also broken up; and a very considerable number of the beautiful old majolica vases with which it was furnished were found only last year in an antiquary's shop, and sold for almost nothing. In a word, the monastery was not only despoiled, but despoiled in the most reckless way: of all its treasures, nothing, or almost nothing, now remains.

On the return of the monks from their exile, the Grand Duke Leopold did what he could to reinstate them in their possessions; but much was irrevocably lost. Of the land, as I have said, a considerable portion had been sold; and dotted here and there over this property are little fragments and corners of land owned by private persons, generally peasants. Their landed property, however, was still very extensive and productive. Taxes then in Tuscany were very light; for the Government was inexpensively conducted, the country was prosperous, the revenues large, the Grand Duke paternal in his rule, the court simple, industry flourishing, and the cost of living slight in comparison with what it now is. Whatever political griefs the Tuscans may have had to complain of, they were not oppressed by taxes

and Government impositions as they now are. As the annual taxes on this property were 24,000 *scudi*, it is plain that the revenues it yielded must have been very large. Reckoned at 6 per cent, they would have amounted to 400,000 *scudi*, which is more than 2,000,000 francs.

How, then, was this revenue obtained? In the first place, from the forests, which yielded an immense supply of timber, that in itself was very valuable for building—being principally of chestnut, beech, and firs. What was not fitted for this purpose served as firewood. Again, the fruit of the chestnuts, enormous in quantity, brought in a very considerable sum. A great saw-mill, run by water-power, was in constant operation; and this alone, it was calculated, paid the Government tax. Besides this, herds of cattle and flocks of sheep were pastured here, and bred. One great farm, called the Mettata, was devoted to dairy purposes, and housed a hundred cows; another, the Porcaria, was a farm for pigs. Still others were sown with grain; and though a good deal of the land was wild and unproductive, yet a large portion was fairly well cultivated. To carry on all this a great number of persons was required; and all the labouring population found their benefit from it, as well as the towns and cities, which were thus supplied with food, and fruit, and timber.

This state of things continued until Tuscany renounced, by popular vote, its autonomy, and annexed itself to Piedmont and the young kingdom of Italy. Then came the

* "The pictures, designs, and engravings" (says Fontani in his '*Viaggio Istoric Pittorico dell' Italia*,' p. 160, 1818), "were numberless, and even to cite them, and enumerate individually one by one their merits, would be an extremely long and tiresome task. The library was rich in works adapted to sacred study, and in the learned languages, as well as in subjects relating to art and to modern philosophy. It contained also rare editions, especially of the fifteenth century, and valuable manuscripts, rich with beautiful ornamentation and miniatures."

abolition of the monastic houses, and the expropriation of all their property; and Vallombrosa, among the rest, became the public domain. The monks were driven away, and the property is now administered by the Italian Government.

For one, on principle, I protest against this violent assumption by the Government—this expropriation, without fair remuneration, of monastic property. It is a clear violation of all rights of property, or all so-called rights admitted and established by the consent of all civilised nations, for *ab origine* the only right is force,—

“That they shall take who have the
power,
And they shall keep who can.”

If a Government can sequester and assume at its will, without payment therefor, all property belonging to religious bodies and communities, why can it not, on the same principle, take the property belonging to any other class—to merchants? to artists, to princes, to hospitals. Of course, it is admitted by established laws that it may, for the public necessity or benefit, take any private property, but solely on one condition, that it gives a fair remuneration for it; and this is precisely what it does not do in the case of monastic bodies. If monastic institutions are contrary to what are deemed the best interests of the State, it may abolish them; it may prohibit the establishment of such bodies for the future; it may possibly even break up those that exist: granted, but only on the same conditions which would apply to all other property held by all other bodies. There cannot justly be one law for monks and nuns as to property, and a totally different one for all other persons. This would be simply a tyrannical exercise of power, contrary to all

equity, contrary to all recognised principles of law. In the case of religious corporations, their lands and houses have been given, granted, or purchased by them according to law; and it is impossible to see why they should be made an exception to all other persons, why their lands should be virtually wrested from them without adequate remuneration, and why they should be turned out into the world on a scanty pittance, scarcely sufficient to enable them to live. It is even worse in some respects for them than for any other class; for their vows, and habits of life, and religious pledges, not only render them unfit for other avocations, but disable them from assuming them. I have no special admiration for or sympathy with monastic bodies. They have undoubtedly done good work in the past, and in their monasteries for centuries was kept alive the fire of literature, which was elsewhere almost entirely extinguished. Without them a gross darkness would have covered the world; the precious works of ancient learning would have been lost; science would have suffered total eclipse, and civilisation declined. If there was a good deal of superstition mixed up with their religious doctrines, if their lives were not on the highest line of Christianity, their influence was at least humanising. They afforded refuge and succour to the poor; they exercised the duties of hospitality; they preached and practised charity to their neighbours, and held up a higher standard of life. They showed at times rare examples of piety and good works; and at all events, whatever were their shortcomings, they were above the general level of society. Their lands and houses were solemnly and formally given to them by deed or bequest. They were as

absolute owners of them by law as any other persons or bodies were of their houses and lands: and if it is now thought, on the whole, that their good work has been accomplished, and their influence is noxious, this may be a good reason, even if it be a mistaken one, for abolishing them as corporations, and restricting their powers and rights for the future; but it is not a good reason for depriving them of their possessions without proper remuneration, and making them exceptions to the laws applying to all other persons and property. Liberty and law in a properly administered country are universal in their operation. It is not one thing for one class and another for another class.

But Italy has thought differently, and has abolished most of the monastic orders, and confiscated the greater portion of their property, without that fair remuneration which would have been denied to no other class. Among other monasteries, Vallombrosa has been confiscated; and of the hundred monks who have lived and administered this large property, and studied and performed the duties of hospitality and charity, only three now remain—on sufferance—deprived of all rights of ownership.

The question is, on the whole (without regard to the justice and equity of the change), what advantage has been gained by the nation—the people at large—or the people and peasants of the neighbourhood? In the matter of revenue, the nation has certainly been the loser. As we have already seen, under the administration of the monks the taxes then paid to the Government, light as taxes were then, amounted to 29,000 *scudi* or *francesconi*—equivalent to about 125,000 francs in gold—all of which was derived from the profits of one great saw-

mill. At present the net income of the entire property is about 45,000 *lire* or francs in paper, at a discount of from 10 to 12 per cent, or about 60,000 in gross. The annual loss, then, is at least from 65,000 (taking the gross revenue) to 80,000 (taking the net revenue), as we properly should.

What advantage has been derived by the people, and the peasants and labouring classes of the neighbourhood, the latter of whom depended on it for their living? Absolutely none, and worse than none. The saw-mill exists no longer. It has been done away with. There is absolutely no tillage or cultivation of the land, which lies dead and unproductive, save in its growth of forest-trees. The solid stone farmhouses are all untenanted, and falling to ruin daily, save one or two which are inhabited by the guards of the forest. One of these (called the *Mettata*) is the remnant of what was formerly the centre of a large dairy-farm, and gave stabling to some hundred cows. But no cows pasture there now on the grassy slopes, from which not even the hay is mown; and the greater part of the house was torn down by order of the Government a couple of years ago—for what reason, it is difficult to imagine, as it was strongly built of solid stone, and would have stood there even if left alone for a century. The farm of the *Porcaria* (or *Porcheria*, as it is now more fitly called), where herds of pigs were kept, and yielded a large profit, is abolished, and the building is untenanted. Here and there are to be seen small plantations or nurseries of young trees; and this is all that is now cultivated on these miles of magnificent country. No cattle are seen or allowed; no flocks of sheep; no fields of grain; no cultivation of any kind, save

a few small plantations of infant trees. All the revenue is given by nature, almost without the assistance of man. One house alone, called the Lago, has been reclaimed; and this was the old hunting-box of the Medici, which my friends have taken on lease, and repaired and put into habitable condition; but even this the Government despoiled of its old castellated towers, which lent a picturesque and medieval character to the building. The Casetta, another old stone house, with large farms connected with it, is also utterly deserted, and left to its fate. All that remains of its former cultivation is a small patch of plantation in front. Standing there, what a magnificent prospect opens before the eye!—over the turbulent rolling waves of mountains, which lie below for many a mile basking in the sunshine, with little valleys scattered here and there, dotting the distant slopes, and Pontassieve clinging to the river-banks; and Florence, far beyond, with its towers and domes; and armies of firs and chestnuts and beeches crowding up the hillsides; and the blue smoke of charcoal-burners winding up into the tender sky; and the rugged fields alive with wild flowers—ferns, gorse, and broom.

All these farms, and fields, and herds, and forests once furnished work for the labourer and the farmer and the peasant; and their life was thus rendered comparatively easy and happy. Now there is nothing for them to do or to gain, and they are very poor and miserable. All the natural products of the woods

and fields are farmed out, after the usual custom of the Government, at an annual rate. These are the chestnuts which heap the ground in the autumn, and the brushwood and *débris* of the forest; and only what is left of gleanings, after the harvest, is allowed to the poor, who even pay for this a very small price. On these gleanings, for the most part, they live. And every day in the autumn you will meet them gathering the few chestnuts which remain on the ground, and tying together fascines of small brushwood and broken sticks, with which to warm themselves and cook their poor fare in winter. Once in a while they get a little work and a few *sous* to eke out their small store. During the summer they get along fairly well. The climate is kindly, and the woods supply them with berries, especially with raspberries and wild strawberries, which here grow in great abundance, and which they gather and sell. In the autumn there are thousands of mushrooms of every kind, which they gather and carry to the villages and towns, and there sell for almost nothing to dealers, to be sent to the city. These mushrooms are delicious, and some of them so large and succulent that one of them makes a dish by itself. Besides the common kind known to us, there are the large orange-hued *ovole*, the delicate foliated *alberetti*, the lilac-grey *porcini*, and many another, which we class among the foul funguses, avoid as poisonous, and call by the opprobrious name of toad-stools.*

* All the slopes of the Apennines abound in mushrooms, some of which are of very large size. Soldani, in his 'Guida storica,' says that in the neighbourhood of Camaldoli there is a certain kind of fungus called Vesce di Lupo, globular in shape, and white within and without, which attains the weight of 24 Italian pounds; and he adds, in confirmation of his statement, the fact that a certain Padre Don Adelelmo, a Camaldolese monk, made him and his uncle a present of one of these Vesce, which, when whole, weighed 21 pounds, and that he and his family ate it and

These poor people rarely taste of meat; it is too expensive. Their chief food is a sort of heavy bread made of dry and ground chestnuts, or a kind of coarse grain, with beans, roots, or fruits, which they find in the woods, the nuts of the beech, and potatoes when they can afford to buy them. Nor have they much even of this fare. How they manage to live on it is to me a mystery; and a still greater mystery it seemed when they showed me the small store of their gleanings of chestnuts which they had laid up for their winter supply. Still, with all their privations, they look strong and healthy. The children were rosy and vigorous, the maidens some of them handsome, and all well-grown and erect. So also the young men were fine-looking, stalwart fellows. But age soon tells upon them; they grow old early; and when disease strikes them, they have little powers of resistance. On all their faces, after they had passed thirty, there was the pinched, sad look of patient poverty, and a certain refinement, too, of expression in their worn faces, as well as great gentleness of manner and speech—at least among those whom I saw and to whom I spoke—that awakened sympathy and respect. None of them begged, though it was plain that they were in need.

I was speaking of them one evening as we were sitting round our dinner-table, when the Marquis Fornace said of some of the peasant girls,—“All are remarkably handsome, or rather, I should say, were, for I only knew the place years ago. Beppa, for instance. Beppa was a great beauty. Do

you remember Beppa?” turning to our host.

“Beppa? of course I do. She was born in this very house where we are now living; and as I used frequently to shoot over this ground years ago, when I was a bachelor, many a night I have passed here when she was growing up into a woman. Yes, she was handsome.”

“Handsome? she was magnificent! What eyes! dark and luminous, and clear as an autumn night. Then what teeth! the pearls of Marchesini were nothing beside them. What a smile! What a figure, lithe as a willow, and full of grace! Ah, what a beauty!”

“Poet!” cried our host—“poet! He exaggerates, as all poets do. Still, there is some foundation in fact for what he says. Beppa had fine eyes and superb teeth, I admit, and was a very pretty girl. Of course, she was slender, but she was young; and all the women here are slender. Elvira, her sister-in-law, was really a beauty, and had one of those Madonna faces such as Raffaelle delighted to paint, such as any painter might rejoice to have as a model—simple, sweet, refined, and peaceful.”

“Ah! I never saw her,” said the Marquis; “but I daresay she was all you describe her to be. But Beppa, Beppa was my beauty.”

“What there was besides her eyes and teeth that was charming in Beppa was a fine carelessness and thoughtlessness of bearing, a certain frank light-hearted way she had in all her movements and speech—a sort of freedom, like a wild natural thing that the world had not tamed.”

found it excellent. This mushroom is probably the same as that described by Theophrastus (*Hist. Plant.*, lib. i. cap. 9) as the *Cranium*, on account of its resemblance to the human skull. Marsili also describes a mushroom which grows near Padua, along the Euganean Hills, which sometimes weighs 25 pounds.

"Do you remember," said the Marquis, "that little expedition we made together years ago (how the years go! it must be at least twelve—more, perhaps; and it seems scarcely six months!)—in May, I think, or it might have been later in the year? Janet was with us, and the M.'s, and we set out from Vallombrosa to walk to Poder Nuovo and picnic in the woods; and as we were coming up the rough road, a little way from the Lago, suddenly 'Poum, poum' above us roared the thunder like a broadside of a hundred guns, and the heavens seemed to split open, and down came the rain like a deluge. When it rains in this country, it rains—it does not make believe. Fortunately we all of us, save you, had umbrellas and water-proofs, and so we were protected; but you, after the foolish way you always had, scorned such *impedimenta*—and there you were, with nothing to shield you, saying you did not care for such trifles. Well, in a few minutes you were drenched to the skin, and dripping as a drowned rat, and we were all of us glad to find a refuge here at the Lago. There and then it was that I first saw Beppa, standing in the doorway, and inviting us to come in for shelter. Glad enough we were to accept her smiling invitation, and in we went. She piled up in the vast fireplace a heap of dry fascines and broken boughs, and in a few minutes broad quivering sheets of flame flashed and roared up the chimney, and we all gathered about it to dry ourselves. But you were too thoroughly drenched to be dried in this way, and cried out to Beppa, who was bustling about, and laughing with us, and finding us chairs and benches, and helping the ladies—'Beppa, I say, I must take off these clothes to be dried. Is there

nothing you can give me to put on while they are drying—no old coat or cloak of the *babbo's*?—no matter what.'

"'Nothing, signor, nothing—unless you will put on one of my dresses,' laughed Beppa. 'If that will do, it is quite at your service; but I am afraid that will not do.'

"'And why not?' you cried. 'It will do capitally, if you will lend it to me. *Presto! presto!* let me have it!'

"'Davvero,' said Beppa, 'really you are joking.'

"'Not a bit of it,' you cried; 'not a bit of it! Let me have it. *Via!*'

"Beppa entered into the joke at once, and off you and she went; and then she returned, shrugging her shoulders and laughing. After a short time, in you came. *Madonna mia*, what a figure you were, dressed in one of her gowns! I never shall forget it. We welcomed you with shouts, and laughed till we could laugh no longer for very pain; and Beppa clapped her hands, and bent herself down to the ground with laughing, and spread herself against the wall, utterly overcome with the joke. What a mad company we were! *Per Bacco!* these were glorious days! Then we put some chestnuts in the ashes to roast, and talked and chattered while the storm passed by. What a picture it was—worthy the brush of Rembrandt in its effects! The fire darting its quivering tongues up the chimney, redly illuminating our faces and figures, and gleaming on the black rafters overhead; the shadows on the old walls, wavering about as we moved; the faint light of the day, peering through the small iron-barred windows; and then the peals of thunder, echoing along the hills as the storm wore away! It was a scene not to forget.

That was my first acquaintance with Beppa. Where is she now? what has become of her?"

"Ah!" said our hostess, "I am afraid the after-acts of the play do not quite correspond to the first bright scenes. Poor Beppa! all that gay spirit has been quenched out of her life. She laughs very little, I am afraid, now."

"I am sorry to hear it," said the Marquis. "Pray tell me what has happened to her."

"She had her love-story—and a pretty one enough it was—and all seemed to go with her 'merry as a marriage-bell.' Her lover and husband was a strong handsome fellow, with no means except his stout arms; and with these he managed to support her,—not well, of course, but sufficiently—for their wants were small, and they were fairly happy and contented. But, somehow or other, he did not get on well with the guards of the forest; and there was bad blood between them. So they tracked and watched him to catch him in some violation of the forest-laws, so as to put the hand of the law on him. Unfortunately, whether by mistake or not I cannot say, he took away some brushwood and dead branches of no sort of value, but which were within prohibited limits. He did not, however, take them for himself—he brought them to us, supposing that they were thrown away and useless; and this proves that he had no intention at least of stealing. But here was a chance for his enemies; and he was at once arrested and thrown into prison on an accusation of theft. My husband, on being informed of it,—what did you do? You know better than I."

"I went down to Figline, where the poor fellow was imprisoned, and did all that I could to free him from the imputation—declaring that I had known him and

employed him even in matters of trust, and had found him scrupulously honest as far as I knew, and urged that the very fact of his not having taken the wood for himself was a clear proof that he did not intend to steal. I was fortunate enough to prevail, and he was set free."

"And not an hour too soon," said our hostess. "Poor Beppa, who was then close on her confinement, had wept her heart away during the month that he was in prison. She was alone, with scarcely any means of subsistence. Her husband could earn nothing for her, and was besides under accusation of a crime which would probably be fatal to his and her future. She had four children to look after and support. What could he or she do, even if he were liberated? It was a terrible blow. Two days after his return she gave birth to her fifth child."

"And now how is it with them?" said I.

"You shall see them to-morrow. Of course, since this affair all is dark with them. He can find no occupation here, and they all have to suffer."

So we went to see her in her wretched house. Suffering, and privation, and toil had made her old before her time. Remains of beauty certainly there were. The eyes and the teeth still were beautiful. But the face was haggard, and thin, and very sad, and the joyousness and spring of life and youth utterly gone. Still the old sweet smile gleamed, for moments over the face, and then faded into sadness again. One of her children was ill and in bed; the others, strong, nut-brown, with large lustrous eyes, stood beside her, shy, silent, half clothed, but with no shadow of care upon their faces. We talked a little with her; and

our hostess told her to come up to the house the next day, and she would give her something to keep her children warm for the winter. I gave them a few pennies meanwhile, and then we said good-bye. She thanked us, looked at us with a strange pathetic look, and then burst into tears.

The next day she came to us, with her eldest girl, of about six years of age; and the two rosy, sunny-haired, blue-eyed children of my hostess, with their little arms full of thick stuffs for winter clothing, stood beside their mother, and each saying, "*A te*," thrust them into the hands of the peasant girl, and then stood still and stared at her. She, shy and not knowing what to do, took them almost mechanically; but when her downcast eyes fell upon them, a flash of joyous light went over her face, but she said nothing. "*Say Grazie*," said the mother,—"grazie, signora; grazie, signorine." "*Grazie, signora*," repeated the child, as if she were saying a lesson. "Hold up your head," said Beppa; "don't look down so and stick out your stomach, but look up." The little one lifted up her head a moment, and dropped it again. What she said when she got away and found her tongue, one can easily imagine; but there she was too shy to speak. It was a pretty picture, and a characteristic scene.

The next day another little one came—by request—and alone, to have a similar gift. This little maid, with eyes black as sloes, and thick tangled hair, of about seven, was as a little mother to the four younger children, and took care of them with a patience, intelligence, and sense of responsibility which was remarkable. It is only among the poor that such precocity is found; but here in Italy, duties and responsibilities and family cares

are thrown upon young children at an age when among richer classes they would be thought too young to be left alone. Here, however, they not only have to take care of themselves, but to look after their younger brothers and sisters—and this little maid was as serious and trustworthy almost as a grown woman. She gathered the chestnuts and brushwood; knew all the mushrooms that were edible, and where the strawberries and raspberries grew, and what she could take and what she must avoid; and kept all the little ones in order and out of danger, and carried them when they were tired, and soothed them when they cried, and assisted her mother in household affairs, and was, in a word, a little woman.

The Government is now building a road from Vallombrosa to unite it with the highroad leading from Pontassieve, and this during the summer has afforded work for the people in the vicinity. But suddenly, by order from headquarters, a stop was put to all this work a month ago, and all the labourers were thrown out of employ, and the little wages they hoped to gain thereby to keep them comfortably through the winter are cut off, so that there is rather a dreary prospect before them. The wages paid here for a day's labour are only 1 franc, 20 centimes; but this satisfies them if it only continues, so that they can count upon it. But when they are cut off from this, their chances are poor enough. As this is the only employment given to them by Government for years (except in the case of the six forest-guards, who have a monthly pay), this sudden stoppage of work is disastrous to these poor people, who have few other means of earning a livelihood.

The Tuscan peasants, both men and women, are almost invariably

dry, thin, and spare in their build—seldom becoming fat, as is the case with the Romans and Neapolitans, even among the peasantry—and not having the appearance of great vigour. But in fact they are capable of much endurance; and though, like all Italians, rather indolent by temperament, and needing some spur to action, they are not only active and strong, but have great powers of resistance in their work. “Strong! I think so,” said our host. “I will give you an example. Last year I bought of the Government five thousand pounds of charcoal, made by the charcoal-burners in the woods of Vallombrosa, about three miles from my house. Those I hired three men and two women to bring to me—over a rude and difficult path. Within six hours, during one of which they rested to take their mid-day meal and siesta, every stick of it was deposited in my cellar—all carried by them on their heads. The day was extremely hot—and you should have seen them as they came in, erect as masts and bearing their monstrous burdens aloft, and swinging along with a firm and even step down the rough slopes. One of these women in especial roused my admiration. She was a perfect gipsy in appearance, with ruled brows, black eyes, a wealth of wild tangled waving hair that strayed loosely over her shoulders, and a complexion dark enough in itself, but blackened to coal with the charcoal-dust which sifted over her; her arms and legs were bare; her eyes like fire; down her cheeks rolled great broad streams of sooty perspiration; and through her parted lips her white teeth almost shone as she came up panting and smiling. She was a striking creature in every way. With twenty baths of hot water and a clean fresh dress, instead of the worn, flimsy, and shabby

rags which scarcely covered her, she would have made an impression anywhere, with her stately figure and her wild handsome face; but for me, I preferred her as she was, and I only wished I were an artist to paint her, with her charcoal burden, her clinging rags, her grimed face and arms, her bare feet, her streaming hair—all, in a word, just as she was.”

The villagers of Raggioli and Tosi, and others in the vicinity, live entirely on what they gather in the woods during the summer and autumn. Before daybreak—by three in the midsummer mornings—they are up and off, with their baskets poised on their heads, their blue and purple dresses, a red or party-coloured handkerchief drawn across their brows and knotted behind, and another folded Vandyke-wise over their shoulders. All day long they wander, and pluck the blackberries, strawberries, raspberries, mushrooms, or whatever the woods afford according to the season, and carry home at night their store, to be bought by dealers for the cities and large towns. These natural fruits of the soil the Government allows them to gather (except the chestnuts) free of tax; and as they are very abundant, and largely in demand, they thus gain a little money to support themselves.

A short distance above the monastery rises a steeply scarped rock, at one side of which pours down, roaring and foaming, the torrent of Vicano; and on the summit of this, 1027 metres above the sea and 70 metres above the monastery, stands the so-called oratorio of the Paradisino. This was originally founded by Padre Biagio Milanese, General of the order of the Benedictines, as a place of refuge, retirement, and discipline, to which those monks who had offended against the rules of the monastery,

or who were under penance, self-inflicted or imposed upon them, retired from to time, and there led a life more rigorous and disciplinary than the other monks. The prospect from here is wider and even more magnificent than that of the monastery below, overlooking the vast valleys and slopes from the chain of Etruscan mountains which rises against the horizon on the north, to the hills of Leghorn that skirt the Mediterranean. A steep and rugged climb carries us to the summit, where the *celle* and church and tower stand. The church formerly contained some valuable pictures, among which may be mentioned one of Andrea del Sarto's finest works. But it is now despoiled of all its pictures and wood-carving, and is used as a magazine, barn, or hay-loft. The old mill, once driven by the Vicano, is still standing; but it is no longer used, as it was by the monks, to saw trees or to grind corn; nor are the *ghiacciaie*, or ice-basins, turned to any purpose.

Near the monastery is another low building called the Foresteria, which was built to receive women who came to visit the monastery. Originally, by the rules of the Vallombrosa order, no woman was allowed to enter the forest, or to pass within some large crosses erected at a distance of about a quarter of a mile. This rule was enforced for some eight centuries, but afterwards was relaxed; and the Foresteria was built to afford lodging for female visitors. It is now used as an inn, and is crowded with visitors during the summer, who come to breathe the refreshing air, and to enjoy the prospect and the delightful walks which extend in every direction.

A four-miles walk down through the woods carries us to Paterno, which also formerly belonged to the monks and was attached to the monastery. Here originally stood

a castle of the Counts Guidi, and was granted by them, with all the circumjacent land, at a very early period to San Giovanni and his brotherhood. Here came Otho III., weary of life and tormented with remorse for the cruel murder of Crescentius, to expiate his offence by penance; and here, according to some of the old chroniclers, he met his death, poisoned by Stephania, the widow of Crescentius, whom he had afterwards made his mistress. The castle was at a later period turned into a monastery, and suffered many changes to adapt it to their use. At present it is a large, square, strong-built conventual edifice of stone, commanding a beautiful view, and surrounded by extensive grounds, and farms, and meadows. These were once admirably cultivated by the monks, and were covered with fields, vineyards, and olive-orchards, which yielded a large revenue, and supplied them abundantly with oil, wine, and grain. A good deal of oil (according to Valisnieri) was also extracted from the beech-nuts; and Dr Giov. Targioni Tozzette has written three papers on this subject, urging that this oil is not only good for burning, but has very valuable medicinal properties. Besides this, the beech-nuts were largely used by the monks for food for their animals, and specially for their pigs, of which they had a large number.

Among the memories connected with this place is that of Gerbert, afterwards Sylvester II., the companion and friend of the first two Othos, and the preceptor of the young and brilliant Otho III., who here came to such an untimely end. The letters of Otho to Gerbert breathe the warmest affection and respect; and well was he deserving of it, both for the excellence of his character and his wonderful attainments. In any age he would have

been a remarkable man, but in the darkness of this century he shines like a great light against the sombre background of its superstition and ignorance. Such was his superiority in point of learning to those by whom he was surrounded, that he was popularly supposed to have obtained his great knowledge at the expense of his soul, and to have been in league with the Evil One. He seems to have been an almost universal genius — distinguishing himself as a poet, a musician, a mathematician, a physician, an inventor in mechanics, and an author in various branches of science and literature, metaphysics, grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, theology, geometry, astronomy, arithmetic, and algebra; and besides all this, to have filled with dignity and honour his functions as Pope, and to have been a peacemaker between the various and agitating factions of the day. Among his inventions were a hydraulic organ, in which the amount of air necessary to produce the sound was effected by steam; and a famous celestial sphere and solar clock. He is also supposed by some writers to have invented the first clock which went with wheels, and the method of escapement. This is, however, doubtful; and the better opinion seems to be that we owe this to the Archdeacon Pacifico in the ninth century. However this may be, he improved certainly upon it, and has the reputation of being the first who made a clock to strike the hours. He first introduced into Europe the use of the Arabic numerals, and the decimal system. His treatise on geometry is clear and precise; he was a good Greek scholar, and a master of the Latin language, in which he wrote various poems;

he was also an admirable musician, and a composer, among other things, of *cantici spirituali*, some of which are still preserved among the monuments of the Liturgy for their beauty.

Here at Paterno he often came — in company with Otho his pupil, and alone — and here he presided over a famous synod to compose the differences between Welligiso di Magonza and Bernward of Hildesheim as to their jurisdiction over the convent of nuns at Hildesheim. Among the other famous figures might then be seen here the noble Abbess Gerberga, sister of Otho II., then old and infirm, who warmly espoused the cause of Bernward; and her rival and niece Sophia, the eldest sister of Otho III., proud and ambitious, and daily acquiring influence, who took vehemently the part of Welligiso. Earnest almost to fierceness were the passionate debates that there took place, and it needed all the influence of Gerbert to prevent an open outbreak: even as it was, the synod was forced to adjourn without composing the quarrel.

These are among the memories which, in passing, we may recall in this old and honoured monastery. Nor must we omit the wonderful figure of Stephania, the widow of Crescentius, magnificent in her beauty, and terrible in her revenge, who flashes across the scene, captivates the heart of Otho, slays him in her fury at defeat of her ambition, and vanishes out of history from that moment. According to some writers, especially of Henrion, her revenge was not satiated even by the death of Otho, but struck also at Gerbert himself, whom, at least, she was suspected of having poisoned. In this, however, there seems to be little ground of belief.*

* Otho is said by the greater part of the chroniclers of his time to have met his

As Paterno was much lower, and the temperature far milder than that of Vallombrosa, the monks were in the habit of passing the colder winter months here, and returning on the approach of spring to Vallombrosa. This ancient custom is still kept up by the professors, and students, and others attached to the Forestal School, by which the monastery is now occupied.

All the forests of Vallombrosa, as well as the farms and vineyards both there and at Paterno, were most admirably planted and cultivated by the monks. In the opinion of M. Adolfo de Béranger—and no one is more capable of giving a competent judgment on this subject, to which he has given a careful study—their forests were “*modelle de coltura forestale, perche tutti piantati ad arte per filari e d’una produttività e rendita giunta al di là d’ogni credere, quantunque radicate sopra falde ertissime ed in un suolo dirupatissimo e Sassoso.*” Soldani also, in his ‘*Guida storica per il viaggio alla Valleombrosa,*’ comparing the condition of the priests in other parts of Italy with those of Vallombrosa, points to the latter as examples of admirable cultivation, worthy to be followed; and after urging upon the Government the necessity of preserving the forests of Italy from the ruin and destruction to which they were elsewhere exposed, says,—“I shall never rest content until I see the preservation of the forests taken in hand by the supreme power of the Government. Among the means which, in my opinion, are most sure to preserve the forests on the high mountains, are those certainly

which I know by experience to have been used in the province of Casentino by the three monasteries of Vallombrosa, Alvernia, and Camaldoli.”

The Government has now possessed itself of these forests; and the monastery itself has been turned into a “*Collegio Forestale,*” professedly for the education of young men in matters relating to agriculture. There are thirteen professors, and only twelve scholars, in this large building. It is presided over by a director, an excellent and intelligent man, who there has his suite of apartments, and lives here during the warm seasons. In the winter neither he nor the professors nor scholars remain; and the building is occupied by three priests, also excellent men, and a few subsidiaries, whose amusement it seems to be to taunt the priests with the loss of the monastery, and the change that liberty and unity have brought to them. Padre Furio showed us over all the building with great kindness; and, when I ventured to express my surprise at certain things, thrust out his lips and put his forefinger across them, to intimate that I might by any criticism compromise him as well as myself. So I kept silence.

The church is not handsome architecturally, and there are few objects of interest now remaining. From a priestly point of view, the most interesting is an elaborately carved and chiselled reliquary in silver, adorned with gems, and containing the relics of San Giovanni Gualberto. In it is a brown bone, of about a foot in length, which is looked upon with reverence, and

death in Paterno—“*oppidum quod nuncupatur Paternum non longe a civitate quæ dicitur Castellana,*” says Leo Ostiensis. So also Cosimo della Rena; but he thinks Paterno is situated about a day’s journey from Todi, in the Contado di Perugia. There is no place of that name at present near Perugia, Todi, or Civita Castellana; and for many reasons it seems most probable that it was here at this Paterno, near Tosi and Pelago, that he performed his penances, and finally was poisoned.

kept with great care. I do not know whether it works miracles, and I did not care to ask.

Among the pictures which were taken from the church, Fontani specially mentions the celebrated picture by Pietro Perugino, now in the academy at Florence, which formerly stood in the choir. There still remains an Assumption by Franceschini, and a much injured Sabbatelli in the sacristy. The cupola is painted by Fabbri.

There is a grand old kitchen which interested me more, and in which there were savoury odours, showing that whatever else is lost, the art of cooking is not. Here in the centre is a large circular sort of hypæthral temple—I know not what else to call it—with stone pillars and roof, from the centre of which hangs a turnspit, carried by water-power, on which an ox might be roasted whole,—a temple once dedicated to the Genius of Hospitality and Charity, where culinary service is still performed, though on a much smaller scale, and where, though the hierophants are not monks or priests, the odours of sacrifice still rise gratefully. There is also a fine old refectory (a refectory no longer), where the brothers used to take their meals, with its reading-desk or pulpit midway on the wall above. Here, with a shudder, said Padre Furio, a ball was given a short time ago. But change has come over almost everything. The cells of the monks are now the rooms for the students and professors. The chapel is the fencing-school. The pictures of saints on the walls have given place to crossed swords and foils. It is the epoch of equal rights (except for

monks and nuns) and of union. (God save the mark! with all the old jealousies and rivalries as alive as ever, and an *octroi* at the gate of every city); of constitutional government (with almost unendurable taxation); of popular representation (the representatives agreeing in nothing but the selfish advantage of each member); of liberty (with party strife and struggle for power, and industry vainly struggling under the weight of imposts). So let us shout "*Viva la Libertà e l'Unità!*" while the poor cry "*Pazienza!*" Words are great powers. One knows a people by its watch-words. I am tired of hearing in Italy that cry of slaves, "*Pazienza!*" I am waiting to hear that cry of freemen—" *Coraggio—avanti!*"

But a truce to politics. Whatever change has taken place here at Vallombrosa, nature is still the same. There is the vast panorama of hills and valleys just as it was when Milton gazed upon it—ay, just as it was when San Giovanni Gualberto toiled with weary steps up those wooded slopes. The same torrent and fountain that cooled his parched lips may now cool ours; the same deep shadows lurk under the sombre firs; autumn still strews the sward and heaps the brooks with the same wealth of golden leaves torn from the chestnuts; the same flowers smile up to us from the grass; the same tender blue sky bends over us like a benediction; and, in despite all changes and in defiance of all politics, we still can have our hour of peace and meditation and delight—"the world forgetting, by the world forgot"—along the lovely slopes of Vallombrosa.

ROUND DELIA'S BASKET.

Dorothy. O Pussy, could you ever bear to leave our own dear little home, and your own little corner, and the mat, and the basket, and the milk-saucer? Of course we might take them with us; but how could you ever bear to have a great rough collie sprawling on your mat and upsetting your saucer? They say that dogs grow like their masters. Certainly that dog is very like Tom. Dear Tom! He certainly does make a great noise. He is so big; and his boots are so big; and he comes clattering in to that big hall of his: he always leaves the door open. Men are so clumsy; and, of course, a woman does get a little set in her ways, as she grows—when she is getting to be—not so young as she—as she used to be. Then the dog comes jumping in at the window—there is always a window open somewhere—frightening one to death; and there are all sorts of draughts, and a great fire fit to roast an ox. No, Pussy, I am quite sure you never could be happy there. Dear Pussy! dear Delia!

What shall I say if he asks—what should I say if he were to—He is such an old friend, and I am so fond—I have always been so fond of him since we were boy and girl together. O Pussy, I do wish you could advise me!

Dear, dear, how silly I am to be considering what I shall say before anybody—when nobody has asked—when there has been no question. I am old enough to know better—yes, old enough. If he had wished—if he had meant anything, he might have said something years ago—ten years ago—or more. I have known him all my life. Dear Tom!

And yet—I really do think that he must mean something. He comes almost every day. We have been near neighbours and dear friends all these years, and yet he never used to come nearly so often. And then he doesn't come for anything particular; that is, unless——He just comes in and strides about, and begins to say things, and doesn't finish; and asks me the same questions every day about little Lily. Dear Lily!

I don't believe that there is another man in the world who would have done what he has done for little Lily. To adopt a child is such a serious thing. No relation whatever to him. Just because her father was his friend, and nobody wanted to take charge of the poor orphan baby, and he scarcely more than a boy at the time; yes, it was good. I do think, Pussy, that he is the best man in the world.

But then no guardian, however good he may be, wants to come every day and talk about a little girl, and say the same things, and ask the same questions. And then his wanting me to keep Lily here when she comes back from her friends! Doesn't that look as if—oh, but I must not think of it. Is that the front-door bell? Oh dear! There, there, Pussy; it's nothing; don't disturb yourself. It's nothing—nothing.

(Miss Dorothy listens anxiously; she gives a little jump as Lily comes in.)

D. Lily!

L. Didn't you expect me? Didn't you get Teddie's telegram?

D. No, dear. And, my dear, who is Teddie?

L. I'm very sorry, dear Miss Dorothy, but they all call him

Teddie. He's Teddie Armstrong, Kitty's brother; he's an awfully nice boy; I don't call him Teddie to his face, you know, dear; but that comes of trusting a boy; he promised to send you a telegram the very moment he got to London. But how are you, dear? And how's Delia? Is she in her basket?

D. Yes, dear: but please don't touch her; I think she's asleep.

L. I think she's always asleep.

D. She does sleep a good deal; but when she is awake, she is the cleverest, dearest creature, the best companion—— But, Lily dear, I don't understand now why you are here. To-day is the day when you were to have gone on to the Blakes. Of course I am *very* glad to see you. Dear child!

L. All the Blakes have got the mumps—even old Mrs Blake; at least they think she has; only she's so fat that they can't be sure; and so I've come straight to you; and I am so tired of visiting; and I am so glad to be at home—almost at home.

D. Dear Lily! And you must be *quite* at home here. You are to make me a nice long visit. I settled it all with Tom.

L. May I stay with you always?

D. Dear Lily! But what would your guardian say to that? Tom would never forgive me. Of course the Hall is your home till you are old enough to be married.

L. I shall never marry.

D. Never is a long word. But you are quite right not to think of such nonsense for a long time. There is plenty of time for such a child as you.

L. When does one give up being a child?

D. Why, of course, dear, when you are grown up. What an odd question! — And why don't you

ask after Tom, dear? You really ought to ask after your good kind guardian. He is so good and kind.

L. How is he?

D. What a way to ask! And why don't you say "Uncle Tom"?

L. Because it's silly. He's not my uncle. He's not the least bit of a relation. Uncle Tom! It's as if he was black.

D. You always used to call him "uncle."

L. When I was a little thing, and didn't know any better. Miss Dorothy, why did he send me away to make these stupid visits? And why does he want me to stay here with you instead of going—of going home? Tell me, please.

D. It is all because he is so good. You know how fond he is of you — dear Tom! he always was so fond of children!—but he thought that you ought to see some younger society; and so I am afraid he has been very lonely sometimes, for he has been over here a good deal lately; and—O Lily! I am really afraid, my dear, that you don't half know how good your guardian is.

L. Well, you know any way.

D. Lily!

L. And so he sent me away to play with the other children. He thinks me a child still; he——

D. Why, of course dear you are a child.

L. And when does one become a girl?

D. Why, of course dear, when you come out, and are a young lady.

L. I shan't come out. I've seen the world now, and I think it's silly. You can't think what nonsense those boys talk.

D. You won't think so always, dear; that is, when they—— Yes, dear, I daresay they will talk nonsense to you some day.

L. They talk nonsense to me now.

D. Lily!

L. They do—at least some of them do—sometimes. They are so silly. They certainly don't say much. They only stare when they are with us, and yawn; and then one of them says, "Come on, Charlie," or "Regy," or "Bertie," or whatever it is, "and have a smoke;" and then they go away, and get quite lively, and we hear them laughing. Boys seem to have most fun by themselves. Boys ain't like girls.

D. But I thought, dear, you said that they talked to you.

L. So they did. O, Miss Dorothy, do you know Regy—Mr Reginald Chalmers?

D. No, dear.

L. He is *such* a dear!

D. Lily!

L. Oh, but he is. He has got a little tiny moustache; and he waxes the points; and his man takes him tea in the morning before he gets up; and for two days he didn't seem to know that I was alive; and the third day, just after luncheon, he said quite loud that I wasn't "a half-bad-looking little girl," and I could have killed him. And after that he became quite friendly; and the next evening he stood staring, and twisting that little moustache; and at last he said, quite suddenly, "By George, you *are* in looks to-night."

D. I think that Mr Chalmers must be a very rude young man. He ought to know better than to speak like that to a girl in the school-room.

L. Well, any way he knows that I'm not a child. That's something.

D. How odd you are to-day, dear. You are quite defiant. I

hope I haven't said anything to hurt you. Dear Lily!

L. Oh, no, no. You are always kind. O, dear Miss Dorothy, *you* will always love me, won't you? Promise!

D. Of course I will, dear. There, there! You are over-tired, dear. You must rest here with me. This is a good place to rest. There, there! You mustn't cry.

L. I don't know why I'm such a fool. And may I live always with you and Delia?

D. No—yes—perhaps, dear, if — Lily dear, did it ever occur to you—of course you don't think of such things yet—but did it ever occur to you that your guardian might marry?

L. Marry!

D. Of course, dear, he seems to you to be very odd.

L. No.

D. Well, you know, dear, that men do marry.

L. No.

D. You don't know it, dear?

L. I mean, yes.

D. I wonder if it would make a great difference to you.

L. No. Of course not. Why should it? To me!—That's why he sent me away then—away from home.

D. Lily dear! Don't you care if he is happy, or no?

L. How could he be happy with that horrid Bertha Hale?

D. Bertha Hale!

L. It must be one of those horrid Hales—no, dear, of course they ain't horrid—it's I who am horrid; and they are very good; and I do hope he will be happy—and that's the reason why he sent me away. I'll never forgive him; never!

D. Bertha Hale!

L. I suppose it's Bertha, unless he likes pale-green eyes. If he does, it's Caroline.

D. But what makes you think, dear, that Tom—that your guardian—thinks of any of the Miss Hales?

L. They are the only girls within miles; and they think of him—all of them. Oh, how he must hate me!

D. Lily!

L. Oh, but he must. I've mimicked Caroline's intellectual look a thousand times; you know it—like this; and I've bridled like Bertha. Bridled!

D. (*she is busy, and her face is turned from Lily*). Don't you think, dear, that if he thought of—of being married, that a man of your guardian's time of life would be more likely to choose somebody who was not—in fact, not quite a girl.

L. (*after a pause*). I don't know.

D. I think I hear a horse.

L. It's him. I mean, it's he.

D. Where are you going to, dear?

L. (*comes softly to kiss her*). I'm going to write to Kitty; and to send messages to Teddie and Regy, and——

D. Lily!

L. I don't care. I like boys. I do like boys. There! (*She runs away*.)

D. Lily! My dear! Come back! Please! Lily! Lily, you must come back to see your guardian. (*Here Tom Raymond comes in*.) O, Mr Raymond, oh!

T. Mr Raymond!

D. Tom! You startled me so.

T. A pretty time to begin calling me Mr Raymond. It has been Tom and Dorothy for the last thirty years.

D. Not quite thirty! No. I think not quite—not quite!

T. It's a long time. Have you heard from Lily? She hasn't

written to me for two days. You don't think she is ill?

D. She is quite well. Dear child! I never saw her looking better.

T. Saw her! What do you mean?

D. O Tom! please don't look so fierce. I do hope you are not angry with the dear child for coming back.

T. Child! Oh yes, by the by, of course you mean Lily—and she's here then? Here? In the house?

D. Yes. She is writing a letter to Katie Armstrong. It seems that the Blakes have mumps in the family, and——

T. Mumps! Good heavens! Lily didn't go there, did she?

D. No. She came straight to me instead.

T. Ah! That's all right.

D. Shall I send for her?

T. No. Not yet. I want to speak to you first.

D. To me!

T. I've something on my mind. I want a woman's advice. I want to talk to *you*, Dorothy. It's about something of great importance to me. Can you spare me a few minutes? Will you listen to me, Dorothy? (*He takes her hand*.)

D. Yes, Tom.

T. I want your candid opinion. Am I too old to be married?

D. (*after a pause*). No, Tom.

T. Are you sure? I never thought of my age till lately. I know I'm strong and fairly active; and I've walked and ridden this country day after day and year after year without stopping to think how old I was. It's a confounded ridiculous thing for a man to sit down and think how old he is! I feel like a confounded fool.

D. Tom!

T. I do. I've had plenty to do without sitting down to pull out my grey hairs. I've been a busy man,—what with being my own bailiff, and farming a good bit of my own land. I've never had time to be much of a lady's man. That's what I want to talk to you about.

D. Yes, Tom?

T. Some men understand women. I never did. I've always wondered about them. When I was a boy, a woman's handkerchief or gloves left in an empty room was enough to make me awkward. My voice used to crack when I spoke to them; though I was loud enough—most likely a deal too loud—on the cricket-ground or in the hunting-field. And yet, do you know, Dorothy, I suspect I was a romantic fellow all the time. I'm half afraid I'm a romantic fellow still. I must be a confounded old idiot—but that isn't to the point. Only I want you to understand that I know nothing about women. I was afraid of them so long, that the fear became a habit; I shall never get over it. Now I want you to tell me some things. First, are you quite sure that I'm not too old to be married?

D. Yes, Tom. I am quite sure.

T. And not too rough? I think I must be noisy. I never thought about it till—I've been practising at home. I've been shutting doors without banging them; and taking off my shooting-boots directly I came in. I think I get on a little. It's hard, though, to reform at my age; and harder to reform the dogs. Of course I could turn 'em into the stable—all except Bairnie. I don't think I could turn Bairnie out of the house; she wouldn't understand it; and I love the slut.

D. Tom!

T. What?

D. Would you mind not going quite so near to Delia's basket. She has been a little nervous lately; and I am afraid you may frighten her.

T. Delia! Who's Delia? Oh, I know. Of course it's Pussy. Really I am awfully sorry, Dorothy; but when I get excited, I can't help stamping about; and when I get into a little place like this, all full of jolly little things, where there isn't room to swing a cat, I——

D. Tom!

T. What?

D. O, Tom, don't speak like that.

T. Oh, I beg your pardon. I talked about swinging a—— yes, yes, I won't say it again. I beg Delia's pardon. And I'll try to keep quiet. I'm afraid that I *am* noisy.

D. No, Tom. I am sure you are not. I am sure you can be very gentle when you think of what you are saying.

T. I can but try. Oh, then, there's another thing. How about my clothes? Do I dress like other people? I never thought about clothes till—that is, my tailor always sent down what he liked; they all looked alike to me. Now, these things that I've got on—are they the sort of thing men wear nowadays?

D. Really, I don't think I have noticed—I am afraid I don't know.

T. Do they look all right? It's a confounded ridiculous thing for me to be turning about here like a tailor's dummy. Is there anything peculiar about them?

D. Oh no, Tom. I think they are *very* nice.

T. Well, then, there's only one thing more for me to ask.

(*She turns away to stoop over Delia's basket.*)

T. You think it possible that somebody might really care for me?

D. (*faintly*). Yes.

T. Now take care what you say. You don't think it impossible that I should be loved—loved, mind you—by a young girl?

D. A young girl! (*She turns away again, and stoops to Delia's basket.*) Poor dear Pussy, your shawl is all rumpled. There, dear.

T. You hesitate. You wish to be kind; but you hesitate. You know it can't be. Thank you, Dorothy.

D. (*facing him*). No, Tom; no. I am sure that you may be loved by any girl. Will you tell me? May I know who it is?

T. You must know.

D. Is it Bertha Hale? or Caroline?

T. Bertha or Caroline? Good heavens, no!

D. I am glad of that, Tom. I think—perhaps I wrong them, but I can't help thinking—that they might have been influenced—a very, very little influenced by considerations of the property and position in the county.

T. There never was a Hale who wouldn't sell his soul—or her soul either—for a ploughed field.

D. Tom!

T. No, thank heaven! The little girl, who is the light of my eyes, and—confound it! I can't bear to speak about it; I couldn't say a word about it to anybody but you; you are such an old friend, Dorothy—such a dear old friend; you know what a fool I am.

D. Oh no, Tom; and thank you very much.

T. She has grown up in my home as in my heart; she loves the old place and not its money's worth—she—

D. Tom, whom *do* you mean?

T. Who should I mean but Lily, my little Lily?

D. But, Tom, she's only a child.

T. I thought so six weeks ago.

D. How old is she? Why, yes, of course—why, really she must be—

T. Never mind how old she is. Six weeks ago I hadn't thought of her age. I knew she was growing tall; I supposed all children grew; but I never thought about it. I'll tell you how it was. It was one of those first spring days—you remember them at the beginning of April,—well, I was strolling across the lawn with my hands in my pockets and Bairnie at my heels—I remember the tune I was whistling—I suppose I shall never get that confounded tune out of my head.

D. Yes, Tom?

T. I heard Lily calling me; I looked round for her, and I couldn't see her.

D. Yes, Tom?

T. You know the old cedar, the one with the boughs coming down and lying on the grass?

D. Yes, Tom.

T. I saw something white in the shadows, so I stepped in. She was sitting on one of the big branches, with her back against the seamed old trunk—just about as high as my heart. No. I can't tell you what she looked like. She was like all sorts of beautiful things. Of course, I'd always liked to look at her; but I never thought about it before. She laughed at my finding her; I believe I could find her in a tropical forest. I put out my hands to lift her down.

D. Yes, Tom?

T. I'd done it a thousand times; I thought nothing of it. But somehow I'd never seen her eyes like that; there was something in them

—what a confounded old fool I am ! Before I had time to think if I would, or to decide that I'd better not—just at the moment when I held her in my arms, I—I kissed her.

D. But surely there was nothing strange in that ; surely you had often—that is, that surely was not the first——

T. The first ! I'd kissed her every morning and evening since she was a baby.

D. Well, then, why—I am not sure that I understand why——

T. I don't know. I never thought of that. I'd never kissed her at that time of day.

D. Yes, Tom ; I see.

T. Oh, you see, do you ?

D. Yes, Tom. And then you sent her away.

T. Yes, I——

D. Of course.

T. You seem to know all about it. I thought she'd better see some young men ; confound 'em. I suppose she has seen some at the Armstrongs' ?

D. Yes.

T. Well ?

D. She says they are silly.

T. Ah !

D. But she seems to have found some of them agreeable.

T. Oh !

D. I am afraid she seems inclined to talk about them a good deal.

T. Oh !

D. But all the time she seems to be laughing at them.

T. Ah !—Well, look here, Dorothy. You must keep her here for the present. Will you ?

D. Yes, Tom.

T. And you must have in the neighbours. She must see more people. You might have some tennis ; and luncheons ; and five o'clock teas ; and things. There

ain't many young men in the neighbourhood, are there ?

D. Oh yes, there are a few : let me see ; there's——

T. Oh, don't trouble yourself. You needn't bother about it—at least, yes, you must. Get 'em in in shoals ; have 'em over in squads from Sandhurst ; advertise for young men !

D. Tom !

T. She must see young men. Good-bye, Dorothy, and thank you very much. What should I do without you ?

D. Oh, it's nothing, Tom ; and thank you.

T. Good-bye ! I'm off.

D. Without seeing Lily ?

T. Yes ; it's better. I won't see her for months.

D. But she'll think it so strange she'll be hurt ; she knows you are here.

T. Does she ?

D. Yes. You must see her, Tom.

T. Must ! Oh, well, I suppose I'd better. Just for a moment. I suppose I had better ? Eh ? What do you think ?

D. I'll call her.

T. Stop !

D. What is it ?

T. I don't know. I never felt like this before. Dorothy, I believe I am frightened.

D. Very likely.

T. What do you think she'll do ?

D. I can't say.

T. Oh, of course it'll be nothing. It'll be just as usual when we meet. She'll come and kiss me, and—eh ?

D. I hope not, Tom.

T. You hope not !

D. Don't you see that if it is just as usual ; that if she comes to you, as a child to her guardian ; don't you see—— O Tom, how stupid you are !

T. Dorothy! what's the matter? Why, you never spoke to me like that in all your life before.

D. No, Tom. I beg your pardon, Tom.

T. That beats me. I told you I didn't understand women; but I did think I understood you.

D. Of course you do, Tom. Of course you understand me. But never mind me. I am going to call Lily.

T. I think I'd better go. Look here; you know you've frightened me. It's your fault.

D. Very well, Tom; it's my fault. But don't go. Don't be weak. You must stay and see for yourself how Lily meets you.

T. Confound it, Dorothy, you order me about as if I were a baby. You are not like yourself; you are like somebody else; you——

D. Never mind me. This is the right time, Tom. You must be brave now, and I hope and believe that you will be happy.

T. You are right. (*He wrings her hand.*) You always were right. I won't run. Call her!

D. (*at the door calls*). Lily! Lily!

(*They stand still and listen. Lily runs in and half across the room towards her guardian. Feeling the excitement in the air, she stops. Still looking at the man, she turns away to the woman.*)

D. Dear Lily! how stupid I have been! I thought you were a child, dear. I am so glad.

L. Are you glad? (*She looks into her eyes.*)

D. Yes, dear.

L. Then I am glad. (*She kisses Dorothy.*)

D. Tom! (*He comes obedient and takes Lily from Dorothy's arms.*)

T. Ah! Is it—— Yes. O Dorothy!

D. Are you glad you stayed? You must take great care of our Lily, Tom. (*She stoops to the basket.*) No, Delia, dear, don't disturb yourself, dear. Dear, dear Pussy! It's nothing, dear, nothing.

T. Nothing! Yes, nothing for a cat to care about.

D. Tom!

T. I beg your pardon, Dorothy.

OLD SCOTTISH SOCIETY.

SOMEWHERE about the beginning of the century, a Scotchman who had brightened up his faculties in the United States, was labouring for a social revolution in one of the southern Scotch counties. Macadam, the future "Colossus of Roads," was developing his system in a district of Ayrshire. It was an immense advance on the strategical communications of the immortal General Wade, who had brought down blessings on his head from those wayfarers in certain Highland districts, who had seen his roads before they were made. Nowhere were Macadam's inventions more subversive of the old-fashioned order of things than in his native country. He replaced deep-rutted cart-tracks with smooth turnpikes on which stage-coaches could bowl along without danger to springs or axle-trees; he surmounted precipitous hills by easy gradients, and laid solid causeways on beds of broken stone over the yielding peat-bottoms. When there were roads that could be travelled in comfort upon wheels, it became worth while to replace ferries with bridges, while the fords and bridle-paths fell into disuse. Men who had vegetated in back-of-the-world towns all their lives, and, like their fathers before them, had seldom lost sight of the highest hill on the horizon of their native parish, began to lift up their eyes and look about them. The occasional apparition of a stranger in the burgh street became an event of more frequent occurrence; and now and then the notables might forgather with a traveller newly arrived from "Auld Reekie," or even from London itself. The life-blood of the country began to circulate; Highlander rubbed shoulders with Lowlander, and landward farmers with citizens

of the seaports; a fresh breath of ideas was stirring in the air; home-born habits began to change; prejudices and superstitions were slowly exploded; angularities of character were worn away as local manners died out. The revolution had been steadily gaining ground, when Sir Walter Scott and steam-ships came to accelerate its progress. The poems and the Waverley Novels made Scotch scenery the fashion. There was a rush of southern tourists along Macadam's highways — animated on their pilgrimage by the romantic associations with which the Magician had charmed their fancies. Steamers were plying between London and Leith. Inns in the towns were turned into hotels; new establishments were opened to eclipse their ruder predecessors; change-houses in lonely Highland glens offered more decent accommodation to fastidious visitors; relays of post-horses were to be found on the roads where the precarious mail-service used to be performed by "sheltie" or foot-post; troops of excited strangers were to be seen following in the footsteps of the Knight of Snowdon, or the hoof-tracks of Dugald Dalgetty's Gustavus — or straying through the bleak solitudes of the song-land on the Border, past the crumbling remains of baronial holds or monastic foundations. The rush of southerners excited emulation in the north, and awakened what Johnson defined as a wise and intelligent curiosity. Stay-at-home folks, like Galt's Ayrshire Legatees, took to securing berths in the London steam-packets. They went up to stare at the marvels of the metropolis, to admire the rich fertility of waving wheat-fields and fruit-laden orchards, or perchance, like a Beattie, to get a glimpse of

the lettered society that gathered to town in the parliamentary session. The changes that Scott's shrewdness foresaw, when the steamer actually outstripped the land-post, as he remarks in a letter to Southey, had already begun to be realised. The Union at last was actually accomplished; and Scotland, for the first time in her history, had ceased to be a province or separate kingdom.

Old people who bemoaned the departed state of things, of which they were themselves the last surviving memorials, have been disappearing in the course of the last generations. The oral traditions that reminded one of past fashions and manners are being neglected or forgotten in this bustling age; and it is only now and then in old books or musty correspondence, or in some volume of more or less interest written by a social antiquarian, that you come on some study of a Past which at least had the merit of picturesqueness. Practical men, with considerable reason, have long ceased to be *laudatores temporis acti*. There is no disputing the material advantages that inhabitants, even of the remoter districts of the north, have gained by the improvement of communications and the universal encroachments of civilisation. The increase of comfort, the diffusion of knowledge, the opportunities of making a livelihood or a fortune in England or abroad, better accommodation, higher wages, cheaper luxuries, perpetual posts, penny papers, and shilling telegrams, are all things to be duly grateful for, as they are things we should find it hard to resign. We ought to be well contented on the whole with the days in which our lot has fallen. Yet most of us have a dash of the imaginative in our natures which prefers the more homely romance of what was actual life to

what we find in the commonplace modern novel. And as we love the rough ballads of stouthrief and blood-feuds, though we appreciate our police force and the protection of the laws, so the manners of our ruder fathers must have an interest for us, while we congratulate ourselves on our own superior refinement.

It is by no means easy to realise life in Scotland some hundred years ago, even by the light that is flashed upon it from the pages of Scott, or by the aid of the narratives of adventurous travellers who must certainly have forfeited their policies of insurance had life insurances been in the habits of the time. The reign of law had been savagely vindicated after the troubles of "the Forty-five;" but the descent of the clansmen who seated a Stewart in Holyrood was an affair almost of yesterday. It was not so very long before that a Scottish judge, belonging to one of the highest families in the kingdom, had doomed his wife to solitary confinement, and carried out the summary decree by the connivance of political friends. Nothing gives a better notion of the distance of the remoter Western Isles from the capital than that sensational story of Lady Grange. The men who had the charge of removing her from place to place never dreamed of disputing the orders of their feudal superiors, or showed any sense of their personal responsibility to justice. More than one clergyman or tacksman of some position was in the secret of her wrongs. Yet it was years before any attempt was made to redress them, or indeed before any intelligence of the missing lady reached the friends in Edinburgh who were interested in her fate. The fact was, that the "Highland line" still marked the boundary between Highlands and Lowlands, almost as distinctly as when Bailie Jarvie with bated breath pointed

out the Highland hills to Osbaldistone. The clans, whether loyal or disaffected, had been disarmed—and disarmed so effectually, that, as M'Leod's Skyemen complained, they had been left at the mercy of any boat's crew of privateersmen who might disembark on their shores. The "garb of old Gaul" had been proscribed, and in place of the plaid the Celts wore jackets of homespun. But they could not be so easily relieved of their reputation for lawlessness; and in the excited fancy of the sagest of their Lowland visitors, their solitudes seemed standing provocations to crime. Now that they were no longer liable to be ordered out on the war-path, we have every reason to believe that they had become as peaceably disposed as any people need be. Yet Johnson, though he travelled under the guidance of a Scotch lawyer, evidently imagined that he carried his life in his hand, till the hospitalities of the Hebridean chiefs had in some measure reassured him. At one of his first sleeping-places between Inverness and the west, he passed the evening in profitable conversation with his host, an honest and civil-spoken specimen of the farming class. Yet he owns himself pleasantly relieved from sombre forebodings of evil by the opportune arrival of a party of soldiers to drink out some money he had given them in the morning; and he was glad to compound for a night broken by their noise with the sense of security their presence inspired in him. While in the valley of Glenshiel, when the people came out to gaze, as they well might, at an apparition so unprecedented as a couple of foreigners in broadcloth and riding-boots, he remarks suggestively, that they "gathered, I believe, without any evil intention, but with a very savage wildness of aspect and manner."

Those ragged, half-starved cottagers of Glenshiel were but an extreme specimen of the wretched state of people of their condition all over the country. That they seemed wild of aspect we can well believe, since probably, except some of the elders who might have been "out" in the '15 or the '45, or certain others who had driven cattle to Falkirk Tryst or Hallow Fair, not a soul of them had been beyond their native glen, or lost sight of the mountains that were the landmarks of their neighbourhood. Nor was it very different, in their different degrees, with the social superiors of all ranks of the poverty-stricken Highland folks. The Hebridean gentry, of whose behaviour Johnson speaks with civil gratitude, were comparatively favourably situated. They could see company occasionally, such as it was. There was a commodious waterway in all directions over the sounds and channels that divided their island residences from each other or from houses on the mainland. The laird called his "carriage," in the shape of a six-oared gig, and, wind and weather permitting, was duly delivered at his destination. They had frequent visits from trading skippers, who brought news from abroad, with the spirits and colonial wines; and sometimes they might be tempted to push their own voyages to the capital of western Scotland on the Clyde;—though it is true that they were "hobbled" by shortness of ready cash, when the rent of one of their rocky acres might average a trifle over a penny English. The landward chieftains in the upland glens, with their principal tenants or tacksmen, and the smaller landowners, were at least as severely pinched, and more firmly bound to their properties. The biggest men might pay a visit to Edinburgh from time to time; but when they

ceased to have Government bribes in their sporran, it was at the cost of the serious sacrifices which burdened insignificant rent-rolls;—for their rents were chiefly paid in kind, and the climate was unfavourable for tillage. When they had fenced the patches of oats or barley, the red-deer might break through the feeble barriers, trampling far more than he cared to consume. The winter might be upon them in the middle of the harvest. We are told that three per cent was considered a fair return for their seed-corn, and all the trouble bestowed upon it; and their manner of threshing, parching, and grinding was tedious and wasteful beyond conception. The black cattle that fed rather than fattened on the hills or in the richer straths, had to be driven hundreds of miles to the nearest market; and even if they set out in tolerable condition, they left much of their flesh on the road. In the olden time, the influence of one of those stay-at-home chieftains had depended on the number of broad-swords he could bring into the field. If he was forbearing with his tacksmen—most of them were his blood-relations—and with their numerous hangers-on, it paid him in the end in one way or another. After the suppression of the last of the Jacobite troubles, he was deprived of the privileges of his position, though still burdened with its charges. His people might be backward with their rents, but it had never been the habit to be hard on them; and he had still to feed a horde of hungry dependants in his halls at all times, and take care that nobody died of want in exceptional years of famine. So there was much to be said for those embarrassed patriarchal potentates if they consented to the wholesale transportation of their clansmen to lands where the emigrants had a hope of independence. In the meantime

they had to make the best of a trying situation, sorely against the grain. No men were prouder of their rank and descent. Not a few of them had been educated in France or England, and had once been in the habit of mixing in a society from which they seemed to be hopelessly banished. Impoverished and disappointed, thrown back upon their own diminished resources, the petty monarchs and tyrants of all they surveyed, they lost their slight culture, and their failings grew into vices. With many of the outward signs of native high-breeding, the Highland chief grew more and more narrow-minded, as he lived on, year after year, in a contracting circle of ideas, striving to interest himself in his shooting, fishing, and cattle-breeding. He was imitated in all respects by his tenants and kinsmen according to their lights. But the smaller man, while dutifully submissive to his chief, showed his inborn haughtiness still more objectionably; and as he had known nothing of the world beyond his native wilds, was more absolutely wedded to his antiquated prejudices. One and all were lavish in their hospitality, though their opportunities of practising it were less frequent than they could have desired; for the visits of strangers were few and far between, at a time when admiration of the beauties of nature was still a taste of the future. As for Highland festivities, when they did come off, they took the form of hard drinking: necessarily such talk as there was turned on topics that were strictly local; so that even when the guest chanced to be a man of ideas, he did little to enlighten the darkness of his hosts.

Yet we suspect that in some sort it was a decided descent from the atmosphere of those mountain chiefs to that of the Lowland gentry. In the rude Highland residence of the head of his name there was still

some of the dignity of patriarchal state. Though the chief, like the theoretical king, could do no wrong in the eyes of his people, yet he felt that he owed it to himself to preserve a certain self-respect. As we have said, he had probably had some advantages of a southern training: at all events, there was possibly some educated Catholic priest or Episcopalian divine who, with the care of his conscience, had the run of the establishment. The average Lowland laird of moderate means—and rentals in those days were moderate at the best—was as *borné* an individual as it is easy to imagine. If he had brains and energy, he had in all likelihood gone to the bar, removing himself betimes from the category of those we are describing. Otherwise he seemed to have sedulously studied to lower himself to the level of his farmers about him. All the same he had a swelling sense of his self-importance; and unless he kept himself closely to his parish, his plumes were perpetually liable to be ruffled, since he was always coming in contact with his intellectual superiors. A certain heavy sodden humour he might have of his own; but he was slow to understand the jokes of a stranger, and suspected offence where none was intended. He had no opportunities for those social amusements which in England must have tended to humanise the manners even of the Squire Westerns. There were no merry packs of hounds in the north; and solitary shooting with the flint single-barrel in the fields or “the moss” was but a poor substitute for hunting. The laird farmed, of course: he rode to market to drive hard bargains over his “nowt,” or lounged about the fields and the farm-steadings; and after filliping himself with his drams before and after breakfast, came in early in the day to a heavy dinner.

There he was ready enough to set in for serious drinking, when perhaps he made himself happy in the company of one or two kindred boon-companions. Whatever one might think of his manners, his claret was pretty sure to be excellent; and if he chanced to live anywhere near the coast, the visits of the free-traders replenished his cellars with undeniable schiedam and cognac. As for his native whisky, it was turned on freely from any of the “small stills” which were working in the neighbouring glens. The party, we imagine, ate earnestly, and said little till the cloth was cleared and the bottles set in circulation. Then they discoursed of beasts, and crops, and parish matters: they told the well-known stories, cracked the familiar jokes, and voted themselves the best of good fellows, till they staggered out of the room or subsided under the table. They lasted long though they lived hard, and one may still read their years on the tombstones that record their manifold virtues. Yet latterly they must have lived under chronic dyspepsia, which would scarcely lighten the dulness of their intellectual powers; and when they were fairly given over to the gout, their choleric tempers became dangerous.

We have not been overcolouring their fancy portraits, though we have singled out no particular gentleman to sit for us. Yet it strikes us that we may have borrowed some of the more marked features from a certain notorious Forfarshire laird, the hero of many a local story, some of which have been preserved by Dean Ramsay. He was known, of course, by his territorial designation of Balnamoon, pronounced Bonnymune; and we find him figuring *chez lui* and at full length in Mr Gillies’s amusing ‘Memoirs of a Literary Veteran.’ Mr Gillies’s personal recollections

go back to the close of last century, and Balnamoon is dimly associated in his memory with boot-hose, a coat flapped and square-pocketed, and a cocked-hat perched on the top of a periwig. His house stood among enclosures of black fir-woods, in a dismal flat under one of the bleakest of the Grampians, and several miles from the nearest market-town. Such as it was, he seldom stirred from it, farther, at least, than his easy-paced hackney could carry him; and he ruled his territory with a rod of iron. Nothing could persuade him to trust himself to wheels, and he never slept from under his own roof. He lived well; but, as Dr Johnson would have said, his table was rather plentiful than delicate. It was supplied entirely, with the exception of the liquors, from his own shootings or farms. He fed his own sheep, cattle, and poultry, and there was game of many kinds in abundance. The dishes, as a rule, were served in duplicate. One leg of mutton faced another; the roasted pigs came to the table in pairs, and a dozen or so of fowls on a couple of great "ashets" were sent up by way of "pretty little kickshaws." *Il va sans dire* that the laird soaked solemnly on that substantial foundation—in fact, he was the famous toper who, when his palate began to blunt with age, pronounced the cherry-brandy he had been swilling for port, "a pleasant, pure, fruity, and generous wine, but very old in bottle." Mr Gillies has one story of Balnamoon's drinking tastes, linking him, moreover, with literary recollections by contraries, which we do not remember to have met before. The laird had been entertaining a friend at dinner who was detained overnight by stress of weather. The next morning the weather was if anything worse, and the laird demanded of the servant who awoke him, whether Sandie

Hunter had come down-stairs? The man answered in the negative. "It's an awfu' morning, ye say? Then ye'll gang direct to the parlour; see that the fire's blazin', licht the cawnels, set the punch-bowl filled wi' plottie on the break-fast-table, steek [bolt] the shutters—and we'se try what kind of a night it will mak!" The guest, though no milksop, shrank from beginning the day with the punch-bowl; and having disposed of a breakfast in more Christian fashion, began to think about killing the morning. "If I dared mak sae free, Bonnymune, have ye nae auld buiks aboot the house?" Bonnymune, as it happened, could accommodate his visitor, and led the way to a turret library, where, the shutters being opened, light was let in upon tomes that had been sleeping in the dust of a generation. Hunter, who, though a rough diamond, was something of a *dilettante*, stood astonished and entranced. There were shelves that were filled with superb Elzevirs, and uncut editions of the classics *in usum Delphini*. The laird, with the superciliousness of a superior mind, grunted a contemptuous commentary on Sandie Hunter's inexplicable raptures. At last the visitor turned to a compartment that puzzled him. The volumes in it were veritable, but there was no moving them; the laird laughed and explained.

"The skelves [shelves] here was auld and worm-eaten; and yae stormy nicht the buiks and skelves thegither fell on the floor wi' a blatter like thunder. Then the grieve he wanted the floor for an extraordinar crap o' blue pitatoes; and John came to mend up the shelves, and like an honest lad *that* he did. But when the job was done, and he tried the buiks, d——n them, they wudna fit. So he ranged them regular on the floor, measured them with his ruler, and then measured the skelves." "John and me communed thegither; and I garred him tak the

saw to the biggest volumes, and he sawed off an inch here and half an inch there, till we made snod wark. Then the buiks fitted, and John packit them and drove them in wi' his mell."

After repeating a story that might make a bookworm's blood run cold, we are glad to say that the visit to the book-room was brought to a close with a fine example of retributive justice. Mr Hunter proposed to borrow a folio that had taken his fancy. "Borrow!" rejoined the magnificent Goth; "didna I tell ye to cart awa' the hale lot o' them? Pit the folio in your saddle-bags, man; mak a kirk and a mill o't, or licht your pipe wi' the paper." The *trouaille* proved to be the first edition of Shakespeare. It was sold afterwards to a *virtuoso* for £500—an incident in the romance of book-hunting that equals anything related by Mr Oldbuck of Snuffy Davy; and it was enough to make Balnamoon turn in the grave—he was somewhat miserly in everything except his wine-bills—to know that such a sum had slipped through his fingers.

We should scarcely have lingered so long with the Laird of Balnamoon, had not the sketch of his habits and behaviour been typical. It may be taken for granted that worthy gentlemen like him sacrificed little to the graces in any shape. The house of the northern laird was probably an old one, with massive walls of red sandstone or grey granite. There was a certain picturesqueness in the rude architecture; for having been raised in unsettled times, it was intended to resist an onslaught of "unfriends." There was a square castellated tower, turreted and bartizaned, to which more modern buildings had been added piecemeal. Red or grey, it was of the colour of the soil, and of the stone dikes that enclosed the cultivated country. The arable

land was interspersed with unreclaimed bog, and backed up by stretches of barren moorland. The best of the farm-steadings stood treeless and bare, except for an occasional ash or a clump of "bour-tree-bushes." The cottages of the peasants were mere hovels, with rough unplastered walls, ragged thatch, and straw-bound chimneys, each of them set in its little kail-yard. About the policies, as all over the estate, there was an utter absence of ornament, or any attempts at landscape-gardening. Unless, indeed, where there chanced to have been some religious establishment in the olden time, there were no signs of an orchard. The garden was laid out strictly for use, planted with the commonest vegetables and the hardiest kinds of fruit-trees. Probably the farm-buildings, with their odoriferous heaps and pools of manure, were within a stone's throw of the house-door. If the laird kept a carriage, it was drawn on gala-days by the cart-horses; and the hackney for his especial use was littered down in the same plebeian company. Lodge there was none, and little of an avenue. The access was by a straight bit of approach, through a gateway with a couple of white-washed pillars, that were perhaps surmounted by heraldic insignia, like the historical bears of Bradwardine. Possibly the approach was bordered by trees on either side, wrecked here and there by time and the storms, of which the ravages had been left unrepaired. Such strips of plantation as there were elsewhere, had been laid out simply for shelter; and the formal belts and the square blocks of black fir-wood would have been eyesores had there been natural beauties to spoil. Necessarily our description is general, applying to the tamer levels of the Lowlands; for in the fair breadth of Scotland there was

many a picturesque country-seat, among hills and dales, or by rushing river, which neither neglect nor the most remorseless utilitarianism could deform.

It may be supposed that the ladies had but a dull time of it in such establishments as those of our friend Balnamoon, had Balnamoon been a Benedict. They could not drink with their lords, and had warning to quit the table when the merriment was beginning to grow warm and the "malt to get aboon the meal." They had no accomplishments; no graceful tastes; the plainest of very plain educations; and not many books, had they been inclined towards reading. Parish visitation was still in the womb of the future, though no doubt but there was many a kindly-hearted Lady Bountiful, who was generous of gifts and good advice to her dependants. They spun indefatigably, and gossiped when they had a chance. Some of the better educated among them played the harpsichord or spinet; and superintending the fires in the kitchen, furnished ample occupation for the mornings. Indeed the "leddy" of a Scotch laird, like Mrs Poyser, was always driving her maids about from pillar to post. There was little temptation to walk abroad over muddy roads in a familiar country, and neighbours' visits were reserved for formal occasions. When a gentleman rode out to dinner, he scarcely cared to carry his wife behind him on a pillion; and indeed, when he went meandering homewards *Bacchi plenus*, the lady's position would have been far from enviable. Most of the lairds were much of the Antiquary's opinion, that the fair sex were at best but necessary evils, useful as housekeepers, and indispensable for other reasons. The sexes had few interests and subjects of conversation in common. And we can con-

ceive the sparkle of the after-dinner talk, when the gentlemen, "fresh" from a prolonged carouse, came blundering up the stairs into the withdrawing-room.

The fairly "tochered" spinster and tolerably jointured widow were far the most fortunate; and that leads us to speak of the society which, within the memory of middle-aged people, was to be found in many an insignificant country town. On the death of the laird, full of years and ailments, his elderly daughters clubbed their little dowries, and took flight from the paternal prison-house. Such a burgh as the Fairport of the 'Antiquary' seemed a Paradise by contrast. There they had everything their modest ambition could desire, except, peradventure, an easier income. Nevertheless, their money was made to go a long way, for they had been brought up to be admirable managers. Nobody thought the worse of them for their frugality; since wealth was associated with vulgarity and commercial pursuits. The aristocratic circles of the little place had always been used to cheeseparing, though the necessity for economies was politely ignored. The Misses So-and-so from a Balnamoon, came with the *prestige* of their blue blood, and assumed their places at once in a sphere which was hopelessly sealed against the *parvenu*. The provost—honest man—treated them with ceremonious respect, taking off his hat with a grin and a flourish when he met them promenading on the "plainstones." If somewhat pawkily familiar in virtue of his office, he seldom dreamed of the honour of an invitation to their card-parties. Cards, and a very light supper to follow, with a comforting drop of something strong and hot, were the common form of entertainment: what kind of table they kept in ordinary, nobody knew save

the butcher and baker ; and their tradesmen paid their rank and manners such respect as the butcher of Brighton to Thackeray's Miss Honeyman. They reserved their extravagance for those reciprocal festivities. Then, punctual to the accustomed hour, each of the bidden guests might be seen issuing from the door of her habitation on the staircase that led up to her flat, preceded by a lass bearing a band-box. If it were winter, the lass carried a lantern as well ; and very necessary the lantern was in the ill-paved and unsavoury streets of the venerable Scottish burgh. It would be indiscreet to accompany the shrouded lady to the retiring-room, where she unpacked and rearranged herself in preparation for the company. In material as well as their fashions, the costumes must have had an archæological interest. Smuggled silks were silks in those days, not to speak of the excessive care that was taken of them : brocades as stiff and as durable as patent zinc-sheeting were handed down as heirlooms from generation to generation ; dresses cut after antique models were set off by frills and falls and tuckers in ancient family lace. Such a show of gorgeousness was of course reserved for the greater occasions, when the dearest of friends dressed at each other in the raiment that had long been familiar to all. So they knew each other's strength at cards to a nicety ; though nevertheless they were apt to forget their manners in a wrangle over the play. The gossip was almost as exciting as the games. The Venetian inner council of the Three was never more accurately informed as to all going on around it. Not that there was anything mysterious in their mode of obtaining news. Their inferiors were wont to pay them court by coming with acceptable pieces of scandal. Their maids, of course,

were always on the outlook ; while the old ladies themselves laid their heads together, with a lively play of fancy that did them credit, to construct stories that carried conviction of their truth, out of the slightest possible materials.

The society in those aristocratic circles—in the *Faubourgs St Germain* of the Fairports—was almost entirely feminine. Males below middle age were scarce, and the apparition of a dashing young fellow in fashionably-cut clothes or regimentals, would have been like the intrusion of a Clodius on the rites of the Roman matrons. The *habitué* of those *réunions* was either a scarred and battered veteran of the wars, who had come to spend the decline of his days in a neighbourhood where his kin gave him some consideration ; or a gentleman who had muddled away life as a hanger-on, on the scanty portion of a younger son, eked out perhaps by some welcome legacy. He roughed it in a garret, hung about the door of the inn, and had to rely for his meals and home comforts on the tender mercies of his landlady. His necessities and social isolation made him less unbending than the well-born spinsters, who set their gentility before everything. He made friends with the provost and worshipful bailies, who would invite him to “pot-luck” at their early dinners ; or, still better, to the snug supper-parties, with toddy, tobacco-smoke, and jovial “cracks.” The man whom the ladies delighted to honour was their clergyman. Very generally, and especially in the north-eastern counties, the ladies were Episcopalian, and their spiritual director was of that persuasion. There was nothing very characteristic about him, except that for his station he was one of the poorest of the community. His flock, though small and scattered, might be relatively rich ; but the

voluntary system in Scotland had never fostered generosity, till the fervent enthusiasm of a popular movement ended in the great Free Kirk secession. And the sympathy and devotion of his elderly penitents must have been grateful to a divine whom stanch Presbyterians were inclined to regard as akin to the family of the Scarlet Woman.

As for the parish ministers, they were of divers classes—and talking of them takes us back to the country districts. As a rule they were sprung of the middle people, for they came of a higher rank than the peasant-born Irish priests. The son of a small laird, of a farmer or thriving tradesman in the burghs, went in due course from the parish school to the college. There he might study through the session of five or seven months on a pittance of £15 to £20, or even less. There were many instances of manful struggles with privation, animated by the love of knowledge and an honest ambition, when the youth who had worked through the summer for his living, would tramp hundreds of miles from his home to the university. He competed for a bursary, and probably won a small one—being beaten for the best by better-trained competitors. He lived in a garret, literally on “a little oatmeal;” often delaying his object by excessive exertion, as he grudged every hour not devoted to his books. Even those of his class-fellows who were in easier circumstances, had to practise close economy. They had no opportunity of acquiring much of the graces of existence, and they seldom brought introductions to the society of the place, or had the manners, or even the dress, that might have helped them to admission to it. We may doubt if there was such a thing as an evening suit of clothes among all the country students in such out-of-the-world towns as St

Andrews or Old Aberdeen. They eked out their means with teaching when they were lucky enough to find pupils. Beginning on what would have been a lower form in an English public school, they made progress by talent or sheer assiduity; and having sipped of the cup of knowledge, naturally prided themselves on their learning. It was their one unquestionable point of superiority over the people with whom they mixed, and to whom they hoped to minister. Then came the all-important question of a presentation. The more fortunate worked their family interest. The father addressed himself to the laird, or through the laird to some great landowner who might have a dozen of pulpits in his gift. While biding his time in expectation of a stipend and glebe, young Boanerges might find a temporary berth as parish schoolmaster; or, if he had the chance, he came in as helper to some venerable divine, with the hope of the reversion to his office. Latterly, when there had been a stirring of the dry bones, and the evangelicals or “wild men” had denounced the abuses of arbitrary patronage, a “leet” was in many cases offered to the congregation. It was a list of a half-dozen or dozen of candidates, pitted to preach against each other on successive Sundays. A formidable ordeal that was for the probationers, as there was a succession of grand field-days for the parishioners sitting in judgment. The aspirant concentrated the attention of a critical audience,—from the kirk-session, solemnly clustered like a knot of sagacious rooks in the square pew beneath the pulpit, and the heritors in their cloth-draped seats in the galleries, to the old women in white “mutches” and scarlet “rokelayes,” burying their noses in bundles of savoury herbs. Most of the congregation set sound before sense; others

went searchingly to the root of the matter: much depended on action, on manner, even on looks and age. Now and then the victims broke down from unseasonable shyness,—more often, perhaps, they failed from pride and presumption. They were discussed and pulled to pieces at the “scaling of the kirk,” as the parishioners trudged homewards in groups along the roads; and for the most part, the popular approval was carried almost unanimously by storm.

But such critical parishes, towards the beginning of the century, were the exception rather than the rule. Most districts stagnated in Erastian indifference like the famous Strathbogie, which has given its name to a historical case. All that was expected of the pastor was an outwardly decent walk and conversation; and even there he had considerable licence, according to modern ideas. Reasonable conviviality was a point in his favour, and occasional excess was tenderly overlooked. His glebe claimed as much of his attention as his sheepfold, as it lay nearer to his heart and the manse-door. He talked crops and cattle with the elders over steaming tumblers into the small hours; he sanctified dances and harvest-home suppers with his presence; he scented the simmering of the flesh-pots at the laird's, dropping in towards the dinner-hour on the chance of an invitation; and might always be counted upon to bless the meat. Some of those ministers were merry men, though their fun was apt to be professional and had a strong local flavour. They showed at their best on the sacramental “occasions,” when they kept open house for their brethren who came to help them. They assisted at deathbeds as in duty bound, but were more in their element at christenings and wedding-suppers; and when the minister died himself in fulness of years,

if his congregation missed “the auld man,” from habit, they very quickly consoled themselves.

Ministers who might have sat to Scott for Mr Blattergowl were to be met with over the length and breadth of the country. But there was another style of clergyman to be found who had a more marked individuality, and one or two of whom we well remember to have seen surviving in our own early days. He was of the race of “Jupiter” Carlyle, or of John Home, the author of ‘Douglas.’ He was a gentleman by birth, or at all events by association. He had seen men and cities, and made friends in the south, perhaps as bear-leader to some sprig of gentility. The travelling tutorship had led to a presentation,—probably to a town charge. His somewhat formal manner and precise dress were those of the old school of French *abbés*. He had literary likings and gifts in an age when literature was at a discount. In his heart he looked down on the rougher lairds,—and while he did homage discreetly to their rank and pretensions, he revenged himself occasionally by a sly stroke of wit. He wrote letters *à la Walpole* to his regular correspondents, crossed and re-crossed up to the very seal; for, like the Antiquary, he loved to have his pennyworth for his money. And he treated himself to periodical trips to the city of Edinburgh, where he did not scruple to show himself in the pit of the theatre, and was a welcome guest at entertainments which may have left some stains on his cloth. His humour was dry, and his manner somewhat cynical; but he reserved all his dulness for the pulpit. His orthodox doctrinal discourses were delivered as matter of duty; and if his prayers did not send the people to sleep like his sermons,—that dreariness, by the way, was

not among the characteristics of Dr Carlyle—it was simply because, by the Presbyterian ritual, it is the practice to pray standing. To see his sonorous periods settling down on the eyelids like poppies, never disturbed his imperturbable complacency, though any similar inattention to his after-dinner talk would have provoked him into a breach of his manners. When we come to talk of legal society in the Scotch capital, we must indulge in a reference to the inimitable sketches in pen and ink by Lockhart in ‘Peter’s Letters to his Kinsfolk.’ Meantime we cannot resist quoting Peter’s graphic impressions of the gathering of the clergy at a General Assembly of sixty years ago. They are curiously suggestive, besides, of habits which, though then considered unobjectionable, would nowadays bring the offender under the ban of the Church for intolerable outrages on religious opinion.

“The different pastors whom I saw moving before or beside me, might be supposed to carry in their persons a good many characteristic traces of the parishes and regions from which they respectively had arrived, to do honour to the great annual feast of their temple. I could easily recognise the inhabitant of a wild and tempestuous region, by his weather-beaten cheek-bones, his loose locks, and the loud and dissonant notes of his voice if at any time he chanced to speak even to his neighbour. In seeing him, one thinks of the stunted crops of oats that lie spread in patches among the desolate hills among which his spire rises.” (Were there many spires, by the way, among the hills in those days, Dr Peter?) “. . . The clergyman of a lower and more genial parish may equally be distinguished by his own set of peculiarities peculiar to his abode. Such as came from good shooting counties—above all, from the fine breezy braes of the north—are to be known by the tightness and activity of their well-gaitered legs—they are the *ευκνημίδες* of the Kirk,—and by a knowing cast of the

eye, which seems better accustomed to watch the motion of a pointer than to decipher the points of a Hebrew Bible. On the other hand, those accustomed to the *pabula leta* of flatter grounds are apt to become unwieldy, and to think that the best sport is to catch hold of wheaten sheaves, which do not run away from them like the hares or muirfowl. The clergymen of the cities and towns, again, we recognised by the superior ease of their air—not staring up to the windows like the rustics,—by the comparative smoothness of their faces, which are used to more regular shaving, to say nothing of umbrellas, and the want of long rides in the wind and frost,—but most of all, by the more urban style of their vestures. Their coats, waistcoats, and breeches do not present the same picturesque diversities of antediluvian outline—they have none of those portentous depths of flap—none of those huge horny buttons of black paper—none of those coats shaped from the rough pulpit hangings, put up in honour of the umwhile laird’s funeral—no well-hoarded rich satin or silk waistcoats, with Queen Elizabeth taperings downward—no breeches of corduroy or velveteen, hanging in luxurious looseness about their thighs—none of those close-kissing boots finally, with their dirk-like sharpness of toe, or those huge shoes of neat-hide—. . . They have gloves to their hands and smooth canes to their fingers, and they move along with the deliberately dignified aspect of men who are sensible that it is no longer their destiny to ‘waste their sweetness on the desert air.’”

A Scottish fancy can hardly evoke a troop of phantom divines, even from Highlands and Islands and “desolate places,” in flapped coats, flowered waistcoats, and velveteen knee-breeches. Yet one piece of conjuring of the spirits of the departed we would do before taking leave of the clergy, to avoid the imputation of looking at an estimable body of men solely in their lighter or ludicrous aspects. By simply naming a Robertson or an Erskine, a Blair or a Moncreiff, we recall the memories of an apostoli-

cal succession of ministers who, for their piety and learning, eloquence and talents, must have thrown a lustre on any Church, and redeemed the rank and file of its priesthood from ridicule.

Divinity naturally suggests physics; and after passing in review the clerical delegates to the Assembly, we are carried back to the doctors in rural parishes. The country doctor was generally a character. If his life was hard and ill paid, it had its pleasures. When the minister took a certain licence of indulgence, the doctor was a chartered libertine and *bon vivant*. Always on the road more or less, liable to be knocked up at all hours of the night, for the most part he did his journeying on wheels. In the gig drawn by the short-backed, stoutly-ribbed, sinewy-hocked garron, he jogged on his way over the roughest farm tracks, and threaded the flows and pitfalls of muir and moss like a border reiver. His "big-coat" was warranted weather-proof; his rubicund countenance, weather-beaten and whisky-blossomed, beamed like the autumn sun of a frosty morning. He plumed himself on a certain freedom of conversation. His ready jokes were of the broadest; his fund of anecdote was full-flavoured as his favourite whisky; he fetched and carried the parochial gossip and scandals, recounting them with florid embellishments of his own. The training of the medical classes at the colleges was very different from that of the divinity halls. The medical student had heard the chimes at midnight; he had held high-jinks till the small hours in tavern parlours; he had his share of stirring adventure in the way of body-snatching, when possibly the pellets of the watchers' guns had given his comrades a "case" for superficial surgery. Cradled in science, such as it was—familiarised in the course

of his avocations with the terrors of death,—he assumed or affected a kind of scepticism. At all events, he touched lightly, and even jocularly, on subjects which his patients either avoided or approached with a certain reverence. Nevertheless the doctor was a general favourite; and if his visits were not invariably welcome, it was only because they involved a fee. He was fairly skilful as a rule, for the Scotch schools of medicine have always stood high. In any case, he was the cock of his particular walk, speaking with an authority which was never shaken by consultation, since there was no un-neighbourly rival to dispute his views. Skilful as he might be, his treatment was rough, if he did not confine himself to the "simples of laudamy and calamy"—the pharmacopœia of the Scotch farrier turned physician, interviewed by Scott at Flodden. But he knew the constitutions he had to treat, as he humoured the peculiarities of his patients by way of gilding the pills of his modest charges. And often, when he had got a little capital together, he sank his savings in a nineteen years' lease, and eked out his living by farming. Then the doctor, as he drove his rounds, was always ready for a deal. And he "hedged" against fruitless chaffering over a bargain; for he drew in his chair to the family board, prolonged the discussion over the tumblers, and so made a profit in any case out of the other party.

As for the farmers of those days, ranging from the man with several "pair of horse" to the small crofter who clubbed for a superannuated screw with a neighbour, they were for the most part well-to-do and contented. Big holdings, however, were the exception, for not many of the tenants were men of capital. Brose, porridge, and kail formed the staple of their fare. The decent

black suit, stowed away in the "muckle kist" through the week, came forth on the Sabbath, smelling strong of the peat-reek; and being carefully brushed and darned, might be handed down as an heirloom. The happiest of the class, according to our fancy, were to be found among those sheep-farmers of the Border country whom Scott has immortalised in his Dandie Dinmont. Wrapped in their grey "mauds," they strode over hill and dale among the bleating flocks. The old Border spirit that craved excitements still survived; finding vent, in place of reiving and fighting, in sport, or a bout of single-stick at the fairs. "The Duke," or whoever the landlord might be, was not strict as to the game on his extensive domains. The sheep-farmers shot the muirfowl and the blackcock. They kept their "grews" and coursed the "mawkins." They burned the water and leistered the salmon, all in the way of honest sport. They gathered from great distances to such "ploys" as the sheep shearing or the sheep-washing. They extended uproarious hospitality to the chapmen on circuit, who came into their valleys to buy their wool. And with their sturdy frames and their healthful habits, they came to riper years than any of their contemporaries, in spite of occasional broken heads, and though the gospel of temperance had never been preached to them. To take an instance we happen to have in our memory—the father of the Ettrick Shepherd died at the age of 93, his grandfather at 84, and his mother at 83. They grew rich too, while making the most of their lives; for we remember how Dinmont had money in plenty to waste in law-pleas and "ware" upon groceries, notwithstanding the losses now and then of some hard winter, when the sheep had been "smooored" by scores in the

drifts. It was from among those hearty good fellows, the prototypes of his Hobbie Elliotts and Dandies, that Scott recruited the Abbotsford Hunt; and it was one of these who, on riding home after the annual dinner, observed to the goodwife as she was assisting him to bed, that he only wished he could stay in the blankets for a twelvemonth, since there was nothing worth living for but the Abbotsford Hunt.

His Lowland *confrère* took his enjoyments more seriously—we can hardly say more soberly. Where a Balmamoon was a type of the laird, we may imagine what the tenant-farmer must have been. Only industry and habits of frugality helped to keep him straight, while even in the districts most absolutely abandoned to "moderation," he had the forms of religion, if not the spirit. It was a feather in his bonnet to sit in the kirk-session, and nod in the elder's pew, literally at the feet of the minister. He was severe on the offences which had ceased to please him, summarily sentencing sinners against the seventh commandment to the stool of repentance, where they were publicly rebuked in the face of the congregation. But he saw no harm, of course, in what Boswell calls "a cheerful glass," and the number of social glasses were apt to be multiplied indefinitely. Sound spirits were to be had for a mere song. The landward parishes lay up towards the glens, where illicit distilling of whisky scented with the peat went briskly forward; and on the seaboard there were not many of the country people who were not more or less in league with the fair traders. Through the obscurity of some moonless night a light flashing from a headland gave the signal. The cutter ran in shore, the boats were piped away; kegs, casks, and cases, were lowered from the decks; a bustle in the shadows

of the cliffs along a line of spectre-like figures; and the trains of horses, taken from the plough for the job, struck away under armed escort for the interior. So even crofters, if it pleased them, "pree'd" the "Nantz" that had never paid his Majesty a farthing, and sweetened their punch with the sugar that had slipped through the links of the preventive chain. It was whispered that even the minister asked no questions if his man, when he came to open the byre of a morning, stumbled over a keg that had been left on the threshold; and it was not to be expected that the members of his flock should show themselves more strait-laced. The farmer was a man of few ideas, though he had had a smattering of fair education. His library consisted of the Bible, the Confession of Faith, some stray volumes of sermons, with occasionally an old treatise on agriculture. Though duly dusted, the books were seldom used, with the exception, indeed, of the big Bible; though he would sometimes send himself to sleep over a "screed of divinity" of a Sabbath afternoon. His politics generally were those of the laird, whom he followed to the poll in virtue of his tenure. His farming, too, was strictly in conformity with the conditions of his lease; and these had been drawn on principles as primitive as his implements. His was by no means the modern system that sows money with the idea of getting it back again with handsome interest. On the contrary, he never spent a shilling he could save, and made his rent, with some margin over, by scraping. So it was that, until the last generation, so much of the tillable moorland was left unreclaimed. The only thing he was ready to squander was his time, when it was a question of driving a bargain with his neighbour. Then,

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as now, indeed, he would squabble over a half-crown in the way of luck-penny, in settling the terms for half-a-dozen of "nowt." Yet he likewise was not unmindful of the national virtue of hospitality, and was always sociably disposed when the darkness barred him from his labours. He was delighted to welcome a neighbour to a "crack" and a share of the contents of the kail-pot and case-bottle. And he liked to see his family and working people enjoying themselves at some harvest-home or household festival. When the cobwebbed rafters in the loft over the stable were dimly lighted up with oil and tallow,—when rough boards supported on rickety trestles groaned under boiled beef and ponderous puddings,—when afterwards trays of steaming beverages were borne round among the jolly company by maids with flaming ribbons in their fire-coloured hair,—when the musicians sat perched on barrels in the corner, plying their elbows indefatigably as they screwed the strathspeys out of their fiddles, and the roof echoed to the shrieks of the dancers in the "Hoolachan," whose boot-heels were knocking clouds of hay-dust out of the flooring.

But if we studied the Scotland of three-quarters of a century ago only in the country burghs and rural districts, we should carry away most mistaken impressions of it. Not forgetting its castles, country-seats, and university towns, its kirks, manses, and parochial schools, we may say honestly that its rank, wealth, and intelligence had all and always centred in the capital. The aristocratic denizens of "Auld Reekie" might have sung with slight local variations, and with more reason, the favourite refrain of the Viennese—

"Es gibt nur eine Kaiser-stadt,
Es gibt nur eine Wien."

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Edinburgh reigned without a rival; for Glasgow, after rising into affluence under the rule of its "tobacco lords," and though it was being enriched by the flourishing commerce of the sugar-plantations, was but a mushroom-growth of modern prosperity. It had few antiquities save its magnificent cathedral, and no traditions. In Edinburgh, much had been made of a situation unrivalled for picturesqueness. So far back as the times of Mary of Guise and her daughter, French gentlemen accustomed to the squalid network of streets in the isle of the city of Paris and the purlieus of their new palace of the Louvre, had been astonished at the effect of the imposing thoroughfare that climbed the hill from the Abbey of "Sainte Croix" to the castle. Nor did the domestic architecture seem altogether unworthy of those noble national monuments. It is true that in Old Edinburgh as in Paris, and every other great city of the times, the bulk of the *bas peuple* had been crushed together in closes, covered ways, and squalid alleys. But the hotels of the nobility, with the houses of the gentry and wealthy burghers that faced the Canongate and the High Street, the Luckenbooths and the Lawnmarket, had been adorned according to the lights of the age, many of them in the French style and by foreign artists. Some of them stood *entre cour et jardin*: they had their bartizaned turrets, zigzagged gables, narrow mullioned windows, fantastic gutter-pipes, and coats of armorial bearings sculptured over richly wrought entrance portals. Within doors, massive staircases led to tolerably spacious rooms, often with carved ceilings and chimney-pieces, and pannelled wainscoting of polished oak. The masonry was solid beyond conception; and so it is that more than one of these vener-

able mansions still remain for our inspection. It seemed as if their occupants, even when they quitted the country for the town, had brought their strategical instincts along with them, and, elbowed still on the crown of the causeway by feudal enemies, were always ready to stand a siege in form. It puzzles us to surmise where the money came from in those turbulent times of rapine and bloodshed, when men scratched the seed-corn into the impoverished soil, doubting much whether they would be suffered to gather the harvest.

But although the old aristocracy lived in a certain state, they dispensed of course with modern refinements; and even their descendants in the more recent days of which we are writing were serenely indifferent to the nuisances with which our sanitary boards have to deal. Naturally we get the most vivid notions of Old Edinburgh from the novels of Scott, who knew it not only by hearsay, but by his boyish recollections. The account of Colonel Mannering's visit to it will occur to everybody. The visits of strangers were still nearly as rare as they had ever been; the citizens lived tranquilly *en famille*, wedded to their old ways. The Colonel had arrived late, and left his quarters in the Bristo Port in the evening, to make his call on Mr Pleydell. Traveller as he had been, he was profoundly struck by the most picturesque of modern cities. "The extraordinary height of the houses was marked by lights, which, glimmering irregularly along their front, ascended so high among the attics, that they seemed at length to twinkle in the middle sky." But the "caddie" who guided him hurried him along, and a change came over the spirit of his meditations when the pair had turned aside from the main street into the lane that led to the lawyer's lodgings. In the dark-

ness he judged of the place chiefly by the closeness of the buildings between which he groped his perilous way, and by the blending of stenches that overpowered his nostrils. Next morning, when he revisited the spot by daylight, these unfavourable impressions were more than confirmed. "The houses on each side of the lane were so close, that the neighbours might have shaken hands with each other from the different sides; and occasionally the space between was traversed by wooden galleries, and thus entirely closed up. The scale-stairs were not well cleaned; and upon entering the house, Mannering was struck with the narrowness and meanness of the wainscoted passage." Pleydell, be it remembered, was not only a lawyer in leading practice, but a man of unusual culture, whose social eccentricities were in the fashion of the day, and he was a gentleman, besides, of excellent family. And while the approach to his lodgings lay through unspeakable squalor, and while the scene of his Saturday night frolics at "Clerihugh's" stood amid surroundings even more disgusting, if possible, he had a soul to appreciate the beauties of nature. We are told how he looked on with smiling satisfaction while Mannering criticised the unrivalled view his windows commanded to the north of the city,—“that incomparable prospect of the ground between Edinburgh and the sea: the Firth of Forth with its islands; the embayment which is terminated by the Law of North Berwick; and the varied shores of Fife to the northward, indenting with a hilly outline the clear blue horizon.” Nowadays we should deem it extravagantly false to nature, that a man should be at once so susceptible and so unfatigued. But use is everything; and the senses of the most æsthetic of our Scottish great-grandfathers

were mercifully blunted against the inconveniences among which they had resigned themselves to live.

In fact, the society of Edinburgh presented contrasts as strange as those of its many-storeyed mansions and “laigh cellars;” and the manners were as picturesque, and in some respects as rude, as the wild scenery in the immediate neighbourhood. Yet what had long been one of the most lawless of cities, where street-fights and faction-brawls were of daily occurrence, had been given over almost entirely to an autocracy of Law. The Lords of Session had replaced the Lords of Parliament, and sat in the old Scotch Parliament House, in the seats of the hereditary nobility. Although the Peers were not to be found in the Faculty of Advocates, yet it was recruited from the most gentle blood in the country. In that close corporation a man of humble birth would have had no chances of professional success; he would have been “Boycotted;” and, moreover, his life would have been made a burden to him. Then and long afterwards the eldest son of the lord of many a barren heritage was brought up to the bar almost as a matter of course. If he were not, then there was a strong *prima facie* presumption that he was wanting in parts, spirit, or ambition. It did not by any means follow that he need apply himself studiously, or lay himself out for serious practice. But he was trained to manage the family estate, and to discharge the duties of a county magnate and magistrate. He went to the Bar that he might see something of life and polite society, as young Englishmen of family and fashion commenced by a commission in the Guards. Like James Boswell, he went abroad in due course, to prosecute his law studies at Leyden or Utrecht. Probably he brought his residence abroad to a close with a little tour,

in which he visited the Low Countries and Paris. The travelling gentleman of the time went to see something of the world as well as of the "sights;" so he carried introductions, mixed in good company, and came back with a smattering of foreign tongues and literature. Once in Edinburgh again, he quickly forgot anything he had learned in that way, and was broken to the habits of the people he lived with. If he chose to be idle, he sank into a Balamoon; or if he preferred some dissipation to the dulness of his country-seat, and established himself in lofty lodgings in the capital, he was apt to degenerate into an idler, a provincial buck, or even a debauchee. It was far more likely that, having sown a crop or two of wild oats, he should decide thenceforward to deport himself creditably. The atmosphere of Edinburgh was favourable to industry, and, happily for the country, Scotchmen had learned as a rule to turn their time, talents, and opportunities to account. The Bar was the straightest road to distinction, to say nothing of riches. The most brilliant of his contemporaries were entering for the race, and had he chosen to indulge in pleasure in place of work, he would have been hard driven to find congenial companions. The aristocracy of the old city, the men who gave the tone to its thought and manners, were to be found on the bench or among the leading counsel.

Once launched on the career of the law, he was bound to conform to recognised rules. If he hoped to succeed, he must read hard, no doubt; though that was an affair for himself and his judgment. But he had to win the good graces of writers and solicitors, and that could only be done by slavish submission to conventionalities. He had to affect a certain formality in dress and manner, and be punctuality itself in his attendance on the

lawcourts. The gentlemen who held the gift of the briefs were generally drawn from classes inferior to his; and they knew their places and kept them; outside of the Parliament House. On the other hand, professionally they took their revenge in the tyranny they had established over rising practitioners. Even silver-tongued speakers, whose services were in universal request, could never attain to anything like emancipation; and so a Paulus Pleydell in the height of his celebrity had the terror of these employers of his before his eyes.

So far that was all very well. It might be assumed that orderly habits and a grave walk and conversation were evidences of the high-minded devotion a lawyer owes to his clients. But that show of decorum was barely skin-deep, as all the world knew. It was impossible, in a self-contained little place like Edinburgh, to make a secret of one's habits to interested observers. And as matter of fact, the most respectable barristers took their relaxation regularly in the lowest taverns. We may be sure that Clerihugh's, considering the company who patronised it, was by no means an unfavourable representative of its class; and this is Scott's Dutch-like picture of a den that would have delighted a Teniers or Ostade:—

"Besides the miserable entrance, the house itself seemed paltry and half ruinous. The passage in which they stood had a window to the close, which admitted a little light during the day-time, and a villanous compound of smells at all times, but more especially towards evening. Corresponding to this window was a borrowed light on the other side of the passage, looking into the kitchen, which had no direct communication with the free air, but received in the day-time, at second-hand, such straggling and obscure light as found its way from the lane through the window opposite. At pre-

sent the interior of the kitchen was visible by its own huge fires—a sort of Pandemonium where men and women, half undressed, were busied in baking, broiling, roasting oysters, and preparing devils on the gridiron: the mistress of the place, with her shoes slip-shod, and her hair straggling like that of Megæra from under a round-eared cap, toiling, scolding, receiving orders, giving them, and obeying them all at once, seemed the presiding enchantress of that gloomy and fiery region.”

It was at least as far in point of comforts, and even decency, to Clerihugh's from the decorous “Mitre” in Fleet Street, where Johnson used to discourse, as to the Lucken-booths from Fleet Street, before Macadam made the roads. Yet it was in such darksome pot-houses and drinking-cellars that the lights of the Bar used to refresh themselves in the intervals of severe business. The claret and cognac were sound enough, yet how these stanch toppers stood the double strain on their vitality is difficult to conceive—all the more difficult that the air they habitually breathed in their lodgings was seldom many degrees purer than the atmosphere of a Clerihugh's. It was not every one who, like the lucky Mr Pleydell, had his windows looking out on the ‘Nor’ Loch and the Firth of Forth; and Mr Pleydell, as we suspect, seldom opened his casements, any more than he cared for the luxury of cold water. Yet he and his compeers not only survived, but seemed to be all the fresher for their soaking in claret. There is many a good story told of doughty boon-companions breaking up a protracted debauch that had lasted from the previous afternoon, to meet face to face for the morning battles of the law courts. For the most part, they appear to have done their work as if the grasp of points and precedents was a habit of routine with them; and we are assured that they never argued

more brilliantly than when they started from some fundamental misunderstanding as to the matters in their brief. Then the Bench would shake its sides over the excellent joke; and even the agents, who were more nearly concerned, looked leniently on these amiable indiscretions. They had a fellow-feeling for a genial weakness. Few of them were so habitually temperate as Mr Saunders Fairford in ‘Red-gauntlet;’ and not a few of the veteran practitioners, like Fairford's ally Peter Drudgeit, made a point of refreshing themselves with a “meridian” in the shape of a cup of strong waters, which had probably been preceded by a “morning” of the same.

Next to strong hereditary constitutions, what may account for their keeping their health as they did, were their rural tastes and their relations with the country. As we have said, most of the members of the Bar were either lairds or younger brothers of county families. And these last loved to invest in land on their own account. There was scarcely a lord on the bench but prided himself at least as much on his farming as on his legal attainments; and it had come to be understood that on each Saturday half-holiday they might take their seats, without any breach of etiquette, with their clothes for country wear under their robes of office. Lockhart mentions in his ‘Life of Scott,’ how, even so late as the year of Waterloo, the judges sported boots, breeches, and velveteens,—rushing, when the Court rose, to the row of saddle-horses which stood waiting for their riders in the Parliament Close. Most of those dignitaries had their Sabine farms within an easy ride of the capital; others passed the Sabbath in the country as the guests of their colleagues. Among the last was the very eccentric Lord

Monboddo; and perhaps no more zealous agriculturist ever followed the profession of the law, or relaxed himself with philosophical extravagances. His own estate was in Kincardineshire; and as he never condescended to a carriage of any kind, he had a weary journey on horseback before him when he withdrew to Monboddo for the recess. If he happened to arrive there after dark, too impatient to wait for the morning, he would call for lighted lanterns at once, and rush out to his fields to examine his turnips. The oddest mixture of learning and speculative absurdities, an acute lawyer, an indefatigable student, an inveterate trifler over profound trivialities, an enthusiastic farmer, and an agreeable host when he chanced to entertain a party that pleased him,—his eccentricities were the talk of the country-side, and his memory has only survived to be ridiculed. Gillies, who knew him well by local report, having been born within a few miles of his residence, thus writes of him:—

“Monboddo’s merits were not easily comprehensible: few readers, if any, were disposed to travel with him in the maze of his metaphysical researches; but, *per contra*, his eccentricities were obvious and intelligible to the meanest capacity, and he himself says of his principal work in three quartos, that if he wished to offer it for sale, no publisher in Britain would give even one shilling for the copyright. But as an eccentric humorist, and being thereby the ‘cause of wit in others,’ he was acceptable *par tout*, so that by degrees Monboddo the philosopher was forgotten or superseded: we had in his place only Monboddo who danced on the housetops on December mornings; who dared to avow his belief in krakens, mermaids, and aerolites; who insisted that ‘the ancients were better than we,’ and yet insisted no less that ‘our original ancestors were ourang-outangs,—an assertion, by the by, which will not be easily discovered in any of his multifarious writings.”

Monboddo, who would have gone to the stake for his crotchets, insisted on trying to force them on other people,—a feat which he was never gratified by achieving, for he was too shrewd to be deceived by a feigned acquiescence. Like most speculative originals, he delighted in controversy for its own sake; and it was with natural apprehension that Boswell took Johnson to beard his brother bear in the den of Monboddo. As it chanced, both the intellectual athletes were in singularly amiable mood, and got on capitally together. Yet the Doctor had said but a few days before, “I should have thought it not possible to find a Monboddo, and nevertheless he exists.” The truth was, that the old Scotch lawyer united to his national acuteness an amount of recondite research, and a wide acquaintance with the controversial literature of the day, which made him, when he pleased, a most fascinating companion; so that he could say, in the consciousness of his own acquirements, “You, sir, have lived to see the decrease of learning in England, I its extinction in Scotland;”—though that was an exaggeration, or a *façon de parler*, when men like Lord Kames and Lord Hailes did honour to the Scottish Bench. There were distinguished Presidents of the Courts, like Blair, who had kept the lamps of legal learning brightly trimmed since Forbes of Culloden had filled the chair. At that moment Scotland could boast in Dr Robertson, by far the most brilliant of living historians; and it had David Hume to boot, whose powers and attainments were undeniable. But speaking broadly, and thinking of his own profession, which regarded itself as having a monopoly of the intellect of the country, old Monboddo was not far wrong. The typical Scotch

judge was probably a sound and hard-headed lawyer, but he was as certainly an inveterate *bon vivant*, a deep drinker, and a humorist of the school of Rabelais. As characteristic a specimen of the class as any seems to have been the notorious Lord Justice-Clerk Macqueen, better known as Lord Braxfield; and we have Braxfield sketched to admiration, although at second-hand, by Lockhart.

"If the resemblance be exact" (of a picture by Raeburn), "old Braxfield must indeed have been a person whom nobody could for an instant suppose to have been of the ordinary race of mortals. His face is broad, and the whole of its muscles appear to be firm and ponderous in their texture. You cannot suppose that such were ever nourished upon kick-shaws—they have obviously borrowed their substance from a stintless regimen of beef, brandy, and claret. His nose is well set into his forehead, as if nature, in making him, had determined to grudge no expenditure of bone. His mouth wears a grin of ineffable sagacity, decision, and coarse uncontrollable humour, all mingled with a copious allowance of sensuality. He must have had a most tyrannical quantity of will, to judge from the way in which the wig sits upon the top of the head; and nothing, indeed, can be more expressive of determined resolution than the glance of the light eyes beneath their penthouse brows. . . . I should think it impossible that any joke could have been too coarse for this man's digestion."

Lockhart goes on to say that Braxfield's talents and force of mind gave him a strong ascendancy over his brethren of the Bench, and still more over the Bar. Ready of retort and rough of tongue, indifferent himself to invective or sarcasm, domineering as the bully who is cock of his company, Braxfield must have been the most awkward of ugly customers, had any man rashly dared to stand up to him.

"The style of private life generally adopted by the principal judges and advocates, and the style in which public intercourse between these two sets of worthies was carried on, were both, as might be conjectured, as remote as possible from the decorum at present in fashion. . . . I have never heard that the excesses committed by Braxfield had the least power to disturb him in the use of his faculties; but it is not to be supposed that all his associates had heads as strong as his, nor is it to be wondered at though many extraordinary things may have occurred on such trying occasions."

There is another judge immortalised in 'Peter's Letters,' who was almost as famous in story as Braxfield. Lord Hermand, like his learned brother, was a wit and a jovial companion, and was more emphatically an original. More fortunate than Monboddoo, his country-seat was within easy reach of Edinburgh, and even in the city he dressed as the countryman. "His stockings were always of the true farmer's sort, with broad stripes alternately of black and white worsted; and his shoes were evidently intended for harder work than pacing the smooth granite of the streets." Unlike Braxfield, Hermand had literary tastes, and before he took his seat on the bench might have sat for Pleydell's portrait.

"He was so much delighted with the picture of the life of the old Scottish lawyer in that most charming novel" ('Guy Mannering'), "that he could talk of nothing else but Pleydell, Dandie, and High Jinks for many weeks. He usually carried one volume of the book about with him; and one morning, on the bench, the love for it so completely got the better of him that he lugged in the subject, head and shoulders, into the midst of a speech about some dry point of law—nay, getting warmer every moment he spoke of it, he at last gaily plucked the volume from his pocket, and in spite of all the remonstrances of his brethren, insisted upon reading aloud the whole

passage for their edification. During the whole scene Mr Walter Scott was present."

The social eccentricities of the luminaries of the law must have indefinitely increased its proverbial uncertainties; and we may well pity the unfortunate clients who got worse than no value for their fees. Though, after all, things were not much better then on the other side of the Border, where a leading counsel on the Northern Circuit having thrown away a good case in consequence of appearing in it "drunk and incapable," had the grace to make public atonement for his fault by paying out of his pocket for a new trial. In short, as we have said, Edinburgh society was a strange jumble of licence and formality, punctilious observance of etiquette and a semi-barbarous indifference to the decencies. A man of blood and position might steal a horse, where a plebeian or *parvenu* dare not look at the halter. Everybody spoke a dialect of the northern Doric with a marked hyperborean accent; but there were ladies and gentlemen of the highest station who seem to have prided themselves on the breadth and vulgarity of their Scotch. Fine ladies who inhabited flats on a fifth or sixth storey, were lighted down the odoriferous common stairs, delicately "kilting" their robes of brocade. They were borne to private parties or to the Assembly-room in their sedan-chairs, by a couple of "caddies" at a "swing trot," along filthy closes and through ill-paved alleys, fitfully illuminated by a flaming torch. In the Assembly-room the old courtly style was carried into the formal old-fashioned dances, with an elaborate profusion of obeisances and courtesies. Scarcely even in the Court of the Grand Monarque, as described by St Simon, were the rules of etiquette and precedence

more rigorously observed. There were self elected Mistresses of the Ceremonies, like the famous Miss Nickie Murray, who ruled over the management and company with an iron sceptre. We may picture the demure propriety with which young ladies of honourable families, fresh from the country, received the attentions of the brilliant town sparks, pronounced eligible as partners either for a minuet or for life. While, on the other hand, knowing that the gentlemen, generally speaking, had been launching themselves handsomely into the ball-room with some half-gallon or so of full-bodied Bordeaux, we suspect that the *ingénues* must sometimes have opened their eyes at the compliments and conversation offered to their inexperience. But it was not in the manners of the time to be over nice. Exemplary matrons, of unimpeachable morals, were broad of speech and indelicate in thought, without ever dreaming of actual evil. So the respectable Mrs Keith of Ravelstone commissioned Scott in her old age to procure a copy of Mrs Behn's novels for her edification. She was so shocked on her first attempt at a perusal of them, that she told him to take "his bonny book" away. Yet, as she observed, when a young woman she had heard them read aloud in a company that saw no shadow of impropriety in them. And whatever the faults of old Scottish society, with its sins of excess and its shortcomings in refinement, there is no disputing that its ladies were strictly virtuous; and such slips as that of the heroine of the ballad of "Baloo, my boy," were so rare as to be deemed worthy of recording in rhymes. So the reformation of manners was as satisfactory as it was easy, since the foundations of the new superstructure were sound.

GREECE AND HER CLAIMS.

PRINCE BISMARCK is all-powerful at Constantinople. To this conclusion the recent communications of qualified observers have uniformly pointed. Such is the gist alike of special correspondents' telegrams and the advices of private informants. The fact is in itself remarkable, that the complex machine which manufactures Turkish policy should be worked by a statesman who ostentatiously disclaims for his country any direct interest in Eastern Europe. But it is a more remarkable fact, that the substitution of German for English ascendancy should be viewed with equanimity, or even with complacency, by the great majority of thinking Englishmen. At first sight we have little cause for congratulation in the surrender of that lead in the Eastern Question which Lord Beaconsfield acquired and so ably maintained. Neither this nor the isolation of our country can fail to wound our feelings as patriots; but it is precisely as patriots that we thankfully endure this humiliation as the only possible alternative of very real dangers. Had the direction of the Turco-Greek frontier negotiations continued in the hands of the present Government, incalculable disasters might have ensued. Events have been kinder than the intentions of our rulers, whose heroic policy, initiated by the naval demonstration, has happily collapsed without hitherto producing results more serious than the loss of England's hegemony in the councils of Europe, and her reduction for some months to be the laughing-stock of the world.

But Mr Gladstone's Government has still power to do much harm: of what it has already effected Europe is now feeling the evil. The

warlike attitude of Greece is pointedly coincident with the accession of the present Ministry to office; and it is professedly justified by the decision of the Berlin Conference, which originated subsequently to, if not directly in consequence of, the general election of last year. Postponing a consideration of the right claimed by Greece in virtue of the recommendations of that Conference, we may simply notice the fact that ever since June last alarm and confusion have been steadily increasing throughout the Balkan peninsula. War is feared; and the blame must in such cases rest primarily on that one of the possible belligerents who first assumed an air of menace. But in this case the Hellenic kingdom has not only adopted this position, but maintained it with increasing bluster for nine months; while Turkey not only seeks no quarrel, but has voluntarily promised to remain within her frontiers, waiving her undoubted right to anticipate attack by aggressive movements.

The petty Power that, with means so ludicrously disproportioned to its end, is now taxing the intellect and exciting the apprehensions of all the chief Cabinets of Europe, is unfortunately able to provoke a collision, fatal indeed to itself, but likely also to prove disastrous to other and more important countries. Trading upon this knowledge, it continues in the downward path towards national bankruptcy, daily increasing its armaments, and vociferously demanding from a stronger neighbour a territorial concession which, on reconsideration and mature reflection, the very Powers whose delegates recommended it now admit to be unjust and exces-

sive. The hopeless condition of the Turkish empire has long been the theme of innumerable writers; and readers of Radical literature may well imagine that there is nothing more to be said on that subject. But at this moment we have to consider less the unfitness of the Porte to retain its hold over certain parts of its dominions, than the fitness of its neighbour to succeed to those provinces — seeing that possession is morally as well as juristically nine points of the law, and throws the burden of proof not upon the defendant but upon the plaintiff.

A fresh movement of public attention towards Greece having thus become a main characteristic of the present phase of the revived Eastern Question, a few remarks on the general condition of that country, founded upon personal observation in the past year, may not be altogether out of place. For these periodical reawakenings of interest in Hellenic affairs have failed to dispel the very general ignorance prevailing in civilised Europe concerning a land at once so near, and, in many respects, so familiar. Regions very remote, and inhabited by very peculiar races, become the subject of special study; and works describing them obtain a wide circulation in England. Greece falls just so far short of these conditions as to be unfamiliar at second-hand, while but few travellers visit it in person. Hazy ideas, therefore, obtain concerning it, of which prejudice is often the sole parent. According to one set of views, the Hellenic race is destined to regenerate South-eastern Europe, being inferior to none in political, commercial, and literary capacity, and having already given ample proof of its progressive character. According to another, it is a mere congeries of

brigands, the mongrel descendants of Slavs, Franks, Italians, Turks, and Greeks, incapable of industrial or civil development,—a superfluous and disturbing factor, whose elimination sorely tasks the brains of statesmen at each successive attempt to solve the problem of the East.

The truth lies, as always, between these two extremes, and must be sought by the plain light of facts; not through the distorting *media* of *a priori* theories, resting on such flimsy bases as hatred of Islam, historical sympathy with the Eastern Church, or a belief that in the Greeks of to-day lies dormant the poetic fire, the intellectual power, the artistic pre-eminence of their forefathers. A blind reliance upon statistics is only one degree better; seeing that, even when accurate, these often lead to false inferences, while, in the present case, the trustworthiness of those derived from native sources is by no means above suspicion. Now the Athenian patriot never tires of contrasting the growth of his own civilisation, and the expansiveness of his race, with the hopeless effeteness of Turkey. He says, "Where the Ottoman sets his foot, the very grass withers: look around here, and see the prosperity of a place that fifty years ago was a wilderness." Undoubtedly Athens is a clean little town, with good hotels; and it has been rebuilt during the last half-century, in consequence of having been ruined during the war of independence. But the condition of a country is not to be learnt from its capital; yet, unfortunately, not one in twenty of the visitors to Athens goes beyond its immediate neighbourhood. Difficulty of travelling and fear of brigands keep tourists within the towns, and their observation is consequently confined to Athens, Syra,

Patras, and the Ionian Islands. Moreover, the disproportion between the respective civilisations of town and country is here something extraordinary. Where roads are not, ideas travel slowly; hence the urban and commercial life, wherein alone the Hellenic race is familiar to Europe, finds only the faintest reflection in rural districts. Yet the agricultural condition of a people is the true measure of its advancement; and in this phase the Hellenes are known to few: of these few the majority are scholars who travel with the object of inspecting the relics of antiquity, and are probably not disposed to bestow too much attention on a destructive and pertinaciously inquisitive population, whose presence disagreeably interrupts contemplation of the traces of vanished glories.

Moreover, many persons who have not visited the country form opinions from intercourse with those charming and cultivated Greeks, whom the requirements of commerce have planted and naturalised in every part of Europe. These are the men to whose munificence are due many of the chief institutions of modern Athens; so that, when its buildings are pointed out to the stranger as triumphant proof of the patriotism of the Hellenic race, it must be remembered that not a few of these benefactors are by birth, education, and domicile, complete strangers to the country of their affections. Nevertheless these opulent foreign Greeks represent that side of the national character which comes most prominently before the world; and this fact accounts for the exaggerated estimates often formed of the capacities of the race. The commercial and speculative instinct is un-

usually strong; it is the same instinct that impels the non-trading Greek to waste whole days in the laudable effort to win a few *drachmæ* at *casino* or *écarté*, that enables him to master in a few minutes the intricacies of new games of skill, or to pillage the unwary traveller with unparalleled *finesse*; and it is this quality that, when diverted into the legitimate channels of trade, rises to the level of a national virtue. Accordingly, commerce presents a really bright picture. In 1878 the port of Piræus was entered by 8006 vessels, and that of Syra by 1414. The imports and exports from and to our own country alone amount in value to about £3,000,000 per annum; but then Great Britain absorbs a very undue proportion of Greek trade; for instance, about four-fifths of the entire currant crop find their way to the English market; so that the united values of the total imports and exports amount to less than £5 per head of the population—a proportion that appears small by the side of nearly £20 per head in the United Kingdom, but indicates wealth and prosperity when compared with agricultural statistics. The census also brings the commercial progress into striking contrast with the industrial backwardness; for while inland towns remain nearly stationary, the population of the Piræus has all but doubled within the last decade, and that of Patras has increased about 25 per cent. Greek trade has probably wellnigh reached its limit, unless some substantial development of the internal resources of the country take place: for the exports consist almost wholly of raw produce; and it is the dearth of the latter that so fatally checks the growth of capital.

Akin to this commercial faculty

are all the other excellences of the race: curiosity, intelligence, love of instruction,—the qualities, in short, that accompany extreme quickness rather than intellectual power or perseverance. The proudest boast of the modern Athenian is his educational system, which embraces elementary schools in most of the “demes,” naval, military, and technical gymnasia of various descriptions, and the University of Athens. The latter institution confers degrees in theology, philosophy, law, and medicine. The two last-mentioned courses attract a vast majority of students, as alone tending immediately to a lucrative career. But Greek education suffers from the national defect of beginning at the wrong end; and the excellence and diffusion of higher instruction are out of all proportion to the provision made for elementary knowledge. Thus, while the masses in the interior are unlettered, the university has more than 1000 members—a number equivalent to at least 20,000 in our own country, and including young men of a rank of life humbler proportionately, as the well-to-do classes bear a smaller ratio to the bulk of the people. But the sons of farmers, tradesmen, or peasants who obtain this training do not turn it to proper account. Instead of bringing mind to bear upon matter, and improving the paternal acres or the business of the village shop, the young countryman exchanges his *fustanella* for a hideous approximation to European garments, confirms his constitutional disinclination to bodily toil, and settles down to lounge and chatter in the *cafés* of Athens, in the hope that some miserable clerkship may eventually turn up. The obvious result is a host of officials of dimensions as appalling as those of France under the Em-

pire or the smaller German principalities, but not supported, as in those countries, by a teeming and industrious population. The regular army alone, consisting of about 18,000 men, can count its officers by thousands rather than by hundreds. Is it surprising that the modest revenue of the State should be swallowed up, even were there no suspicion of misappropriation? We have to realise the idea of a nation of patriots too independent to work, but too intelligent to remain inactive, before we can understand the picture of *strenua inertia* presented by Athens—a town that all day long wears the appearance of a squalid Paris at dinner-time, and where wild gossip and petty intrigue occupy energies that ought to be turned to production.

The industries of Greece are mostly in their infancy. Only three have attained to any importance—silk-manufacture, tannery, and shipbuilding. Of these the second exists at Syra alone, and the third barely suffices for the home demand. Cotton, which thrives on the Bœotian plain, has only called into existence six small water-mills at Livadia; the marble quarries are scarcely worked, in spite of the rediscovery of *rosso* and *verde antico* in Taygetus. The lead-mines of Zea are untouched, yet the ore is probably of the richest in the world, seeing that a native company derives a profit from re-smelting at Laurium the slag and *ἐκβόλαδες*, or masses of matter rejected by the workers of those mines 2000 years ago. A French company also works at Laurium, but its example has evoked no farther spirit of enterprise, and virgin veins of many useful minerals lie unexplored below the soil. Various laudable efforts to set on foot new manufactures have met

with but small success, such as the charitable handlooms in Athens, where work is given to the destitute, and good woollen and cotton fabrics are turned out; but genuine native industries are confined to filigree silver work and the manufacture of red slippers with turned-up toes, neither of which is likely to become a permanent source of wealth to the country.

Agriculture suffers from the same causes, indolence and want of hands. The population of Greece, including the islands, averages 83 to the square mile, and has therefore just one-third of the density of the population of the United Kingdom. Thus, if all the Greeks in the world were resident within the present limits of the kingdom they would be less crowded than ourselves. Even Scotland has 103 inhabitants to the square mile; and yet Greece, abounding in mineral wealth, and capable of growing all products from corn to cotton, is nearly 20 per cent behind the most barren portion of the British Isles. Moreover, the census of 1879 shows an unprecedentedly rapid increase, owing in part to the immigration of Turkish Greeks during the recent disturbances; yet this extraordinary increase of 1.69 per annum, if compared with the present annual advance of 1.72 in our own over-populated country, hardly indicates any remarkable physical vigour. The population of Great Britain has advanced since the beginning of this century at the average rate of 3.6 a-year, yet even in 1800 its density was slightly greater than that of Greece to-day.

The intellectual unproductiveness of the race surpasses the physical. It would be hard to name any other people, undeniably clever, and possessed of considerable educational appliances, that can boast neither of authors, painters, sculptors, nor

composers. There is no native theatre; native literature is confined to journalism: and the fine arts are so utterly neglected that even the jangling of a pianoforte is an unusual sound: hence, if the creative power of a nation really bears a constant ratio to its general vigour, we cannot estimate very highly the vitality of the Hellenes. A powerful consideration strengthens this conclusion—the hopeless backwardness of agriculture and of the rural population. M. About calculated that continental Greece contains 5,000,000 acres of mountain and pasture, a similar extent of arable land, and about 1,250,000 acres of forest. Of the 5,000,000 acres of arable land less than 200,000 were actually under cultivation—that is, something under 4 per cent. The proportion may have been somewhat increased in the last twenty years, but still remains appallingly small. Even on the wide Argive and Bœotian plains, which boast something resembling roads, cultivation appears in insignificant patches; on the table-lands of Arcadia it is even sparser; while in the beautiful mountain hollows, on strips of soil, that in the similar limestone formations of the Derbyshire or Craven hills would be rented at £3 per acre, it is almost non-existent. The traveller is appalled by the surrounding desolation; and yet there is scarcely a product of the temperate zones that will not flourish. Tobacco and cotton grow well in the plains; rice could be introduced with success; and the mulberry, with due encouragement, would provide for the rearing of an indefinite quantity of silk-worms. Figs, almonds, apricots, oranges, and lemons are unsurpassed. The olive grows everywhere wellnigh untended. In rocky districts all cereals thrive, with the

exception of oats; the Corinthian currant is almost a *spécialité* of the Peloponnese, and, since the appearance of the *Phylloxera* in France, has found a fresh market amid the wine-manufacturers of that country; the other grapes are among the finest of the world. Such are the capabilities of a land that ignorance and indolence have turned into a wilderness. The vintage is so clumsily trodden and fermented everywhere, except in the islands and near the seaports, that wine which ought to command the markets of Europe, not only is unable to bear exportation, but would spoil before the end of the year unless mixed with resin—a practice highly nauseous to the uneducated palate. In fact, dislike of field-labour amounts to a mania, and except at harvest-time no male is ever to be seen at work: like other noble savages, he sits at home at ease while his help-mate scratches the soil and bows her head beneath the weight of burdens. The result upon the interior economy of the dwellings is such as may well be imagined. Even in a priest's or farmer's house furniture rarely extends beyond a rude table and two or three wooden stools; whole villages are without a fireplace; the process of sweeping or cleaning is unknown, and the entire family sleeps curled up in rugs upon the floor in company with the insects of the establishment.

So deplorable a state of things is aggravated by two great evils. The first is the absence of roads, at once the cause and the effect of the barbarism of the interior. There is no market to stimulate production; but, on the other hand, there is no productive energy to call a market into existence. The very first effort of a respectable government would be

the establishment of means of communication; but poverty, speculation, and political chicanery have hitherto proved insuperable obstacles. It is naively confessed that no government would be permitted to carry out material improvements, since its position might thereby be rendered inexpugnable, and the interests of the trimmers, who subsist by constantly readjusting the balance of parties, would be ruined in consequence. Thus, while deputies talk loudly of a bill to provide for the construction of a railway from Athens to Patras, a carriage cannot go as far as Corinth. Continental Greece only professes to contain 300 miles of road, of which about one-third is deserving of the name. This portion consists principally of short branches diverging from Athens, such as those leading to Megara, Thebes, Piræus, and Kephissia; or else connecting some small town with its harbour, as Argos with Nauplia, or Pyrgos with Katakolo. Even existing works are falling into hopeless decay, such as the excellent roads constructed by the Turks round Tripolitza, or by ourselves in the Ionian Islands. Travelling is consequently slow, painful, and expensive: the natives of one village are frequently ignorant of the way to another a few miles off; and educated Athenian society knows less of its own country than of Central Africa.

The second great evil is the want of water, at no time too abundant in Greece, as we may judge from the care with which Strabo and Pausanias enumerate its springs and rivers. Yet for necessary purposes, which are extremely limited in the domestic economy of the Greeks, a sufficiency is invariably found wherever the forests have been spared; and thus the freshness of Eubœa,

Parnassus, Elis, or Taygetus stands out in pleasing contrast with the barrenness of other districts. For instance, the village of Mandra possesses no well or source of any kind, but subsists entirely upon water brought from Eleusis, three miles away. Terrible as is the scourge of drought, the people has only itself to thank for it. In its ignorance it regards with perfect indifference the wanton destruction of the trees; and the firing of wooded tracts still goes merrily on—a crime constantly perpetrated by shepherds for the sake of the young green shoots that spring up from the ashes, or even by chance idlers for the mere pleasure of witnessing the conflagration. Miles of barren mountains and dried-up river-beds testify to the magnitude of the evil, which no attempt is being made to check or to remedy. The country lacks a capable government and an intelligent public opinion to enact and enforce stringent penalties, and to repair the harm already done, by planting in the denuded regions the eucalyptus or other quickly growing trees.

Even an earnest desire for these improvements would be rendered futile through want of money. The revenue of a nation so averse to production is naturally of the smallest, and of that small revenue about one-half is calculated to be absorbed in the direct and indirect expenses of government. Every one of the 204 deputies receives a salary for his services. If the population of the British Islands were represented in the same proportion, we should have the satisfaction of paying a House of Commons composed of more than 4000 members. The regular army consists, as we have said, of about 18,000 men, and is consequently larger proportionately than that of the German empire: it is now

being raised temporarily to 80,000. There is also a navy, employing upwards of 2000 sailors, and at this moment considerably more. Such armaments may seem slightly out of place when it is considered—firstly, that Greek independence is guaranteed by three great Powers; secondly, that there is not a single *drachma* to spare for their maintenance; and, thirdly, that they are useless, seeing that in 1878 they were found insufficient to oppose even the crippled resources of Greece's only neighbour and possible foe. Yet a good third of the national income is spent upon these costly toys; and of the acknowledged debt of £17,250,000, the greater part has accumulated from loans raised periodically to place the country on a "war footing" at times of excitement in the East. As a crowning act of folly, the Chamber at the commencement of the present year passed a bill empowering the Government to contract a loan of 120,000,000 *drachmæ*, equivalent to three years' income, to be expended on military preparations.

The suicidal folly of maintaining such armaments becomes more clearly apparent on examination of the financial position of Greece. A revenue of about £1,600,000 seems full small, even without these extravagances; but considering that only one-sixth of that sum is left after paying the expenses of government, the army, and the fleet, it follows that there is not much to bestow upon education, public works, or other useful and legitimate objects. Yet Greece is by no means lightly taxed, though a perverse ingenuity has been exercised in combining the maximum of burden to the taxpayer with the minimum of benefit to the State. For example, one-fourth of the revenue

is derived from customs, in a country presenting the most remarkable facilities for contraband trade; while the agricultural population pays in kind, in a land whose configuration often renders assessment and collection an impossibility. Greece has also enjoyed the almost unique advantage of practising repudiation with impunity. The interest of nearly £4,000,000 borrowed in 1832 has never been paid after the first three years, but has fallen upon the guaranteeing Powers; while about £10,000,000, raised mainly in England during the war of independence, has never even been recognised. Is it any wonder that, even on the admission of financial ministers, there should be a permanent deficit, and that an expensive amusement such as the armament of 1877-78 should necessitate a forced loan of one and a half million sterling from the Ionian and national banks? A loan of 60 million francs has been partially negotiated in Paris to cover this fresh obligation, but many bonds still remain unplaced; and, unless a great improvement take place in the financial system, the State will soon have no means of raising money except by internal loans.

Each successive government has tried to run before it has learnt to walk; hence Greek talk is of railways before roads, of armies before police, of universal suffrage before elementary education, of expenditure before receipts, of ruling foreign races before learning the art of self-government. The task of guiding such a people must be heart-breaking to men of honour and ability, familiar with English social and political life, like the late Prime Minister. Parties in the chamber are divided on a purely personal basis, and do not, as elsewhere, rep-

resent radical differences of policy. The position of the last Government was only secured by a master-stroke of the Premier, who, having barely defeated his opponents in an important division, threatened a dissolution unless supported on a vote of confidence by a substantial majority. The threat determined a sufficient number of waverers to his side, and enabled him to retain office for the unusually long period of seven months.

Religious enthusiasm appears to be on a par with the political in point of reality. On this subject a stranger has great difficulty in forming a judgment; but the Greek seems attached to his religion by the bond of sentiment rather than of conviction. By the bull of severance (*τόμος*) of 1844, the Church of the Greeks became independent of Constantinople, and commands the popular affection as constituting a vital element of the national independence. But its teaching has little outward influence. Lent may be observed by a country population that never eats meat except on feast-days; but in the hotels of Athens there is no visible abstention from flesh; public worship often takes the form of a walk round the inside of the sacred building with a lighted taper purchased at the door; and certainly no great regard is paid to the repair of churches in the interior. If it be true that governors resemble the governed, it seems still more true that the priest is like the people; accordingly, the secular clergy rarely rise above the peasantry in cultivation. They subsist upon the tithes of their flock, and are to be found in every village, combining with their sacred functions agriculture, and sometimes the trade of publican. The rude hospitality and good-humoured

ignorance of the monks have afforded amusing matter in all descriptions of modern Greece, and need no further exemplification. Religious toleration is a fundamental principle of the constitution ; but hitherto there has been little occasion to put it in practice. Such theories do not always answer to facts, and the result of subjecting to Hellenic rule many thousands of another race and creed may be at least considered doubtful.

A subject equally delicate with that of the national religion is that of the national brigandage. Strenuous efforts have been made to stamp out this curse ; and robbery, though prevalent as a pastime, is losing popularity as a profession. Yet in November 1879, the Hellenic Government officially warned the English Foreign Office of the existence of several bands of brigands in Acarnania, whose "chiefs might make arrangements for the capture of Englishmen landing there for shooting or other purposes," and declined to be responsible "for any ransom exacted by them." The authorities also refuse to sanction expeditions to the frontier—a refusal whose wisdom has been amply borne out by the recent capture of Colonel Syngé. The authors of this outrage, although it was perpetrated in Turkish territory, seem to have been without exception Greeks ; and six of them, according to the captive, were deserters from the Greek army.

Such as has been thus briefly described is the social and political condition of a country at this moment demanding a large gratuitous addition to its territory. The prospect of this extension has unceasingly occupied the national mind ever since the Berlin Congress, and each patriot endeavours, even more eagerly than before, to impress

strangers with a due sense of the merits of his much injured and unappreciated fatherland. Englishmen in particular are the object of this proselytising spirit, and receive individually an amount of attention which cannot but be flattering to our national pride. The maritime and commercial instincts of the Greeks cause them to appreciate fully the wealth and power indicated by the constant presence of British merchantmen and ironclads in their waters—perhaps even to overrate them in the same proportion that military and Continental peoples are apt to fall into the opposite error.

To judge from language current in the better educated circles at Athens, England had but to speak out in order to secure any addition she pleased to Greek territory ; she alone was responsible for the Porte's refusal to fulfil its engagements by secretly encouraging its obstinacy ; was restraining the action of France ; and, in short, pursuing that freedom-hating policy whereby she, the champion of freedom in every other quarter of the globe, had consistently abided in all dealings with the Turkish empire. The sudden change of Government in our country was hailed with a thrill of delight—the oppressor had fallen, and the liberator had succeeded to his place. "Could we have foreseen this," said more than one politician, "we should at least have demanded that Salonica might be included within our new boundary." It was useless to point out that Mr Gladstone's utterances, while in a "position of greater freedom and less responsibility," were scarcely to be relied upon ; and that once firmly seated upon the Treasury bench he might be in no hurry to redeem vague promises made during the heat of a general election. The fact that the International Commission had

been appointed long before the dissolution of the British Parliament was completely ignored; and a suggestion that the present Government would possibly not seek to enforce the cession of a single acre more than their predecessors met with universal incredulity.

But on what grounds do the Greeks base their claims to any increase of territory? Their arguments may be summed up as follows: Firstly, there is an actual right, as complete as international law can confer, given by a clause of the Treaty of Berlin. Secondly, a moral right, the ground of the insertion of that clause in the treaty—namely, Greece's forbearance to attack the Porte towards the conclusion of its late disastrous war with Russia, which forbearance was shown at the request of the Western Powers, on the express understanding that they would support Greek claims at the subsequent settlement. Thirdly, a general right, based upon such principles as union of nationalities and practical expediency, anterior to, and independent of, the two first considerations.

To the first argument it may be answered that the clause of the treaty is merely an "invitation" to the Porte to rectify the frontier, and not an engagement on its part to do so. If, nevertheless, reliance is placed upon the terms of the treaty, there can be no claim to the boundary now asked for by the Greek Government, that being considerably to the north of the line originally suggested at Berlin. Thus no absolute right exists at all; while what is claimed as such would, if admitted, be to a smaller extension than that now demanded.

The second contention can hardly be maintained after an investigation of facts. The Greek army, in

spite of the earnest dissuasions of France and England, yielded to popular clamour, and, after months of vacillation, crossed the frontier at the very moment when Turkey seemed hopelessly crushed, with Russian armies at the gates of Constantinople, behind them the troops of Roumania, and finally those of Servia, so magnanimously and so foolishly spared by its victorious suzerain in 1876. Yet scarcely had the Hellenic Government taken this step, when the report that Hobart Pacha was on his way to Piræus sent the ministers down upon their marrow-bones before the representatives of the Powers, imploring them to protect Greece from the consequences of her own act. A promise to remember Greek interests at the approaching congress was followed by an immediate recall of the troops, and the dreaded ironclads did not appear. A forbearance whose motive was self-protection can scarcely be said to lay any great debt of gratitude upon the country in whose favour it was exercised.

Accordingly, but little stress is laid in Europe upon the two first lines of argument; indeed the great Powers in the Berlin Conference altered the boundary suggested at the Congress of 1878, and simply adopted an attitude of diplomatic coercion. The Porte was to be despoiled of territory by the mere mandate of superior force; so high-handed, and in itself so unrighteous, an act, being justified by a plea of overriding expediency, like those employed to justify the sacrifice of dynastic and private rights in the consolidation of the Italian kingdom or the German empire. It remains, therefore, to consider whether the undoubted injustice of the proposed cession of territory is likely to be outweighed by the

benefits destined to result therefrom. And it must be remembered that the verdict of the great Powers has been to a large extent accidental. The rather vague promise on the part of France and England to respect Hellenic interests at Berlin was brought into prominence by M. Waddington as the one point on which his country could assert her regained influence in the councils of Europe. His proposals were received with indifference, but adopted in consequence of England's desire to co-operate cordially with her old ally, and of Prince Bismark's unwillingness to wound French susceptibilities.

It is not yet too late to ask, how the interests of civilisation in general, and of the inhabitants of Thessaly and Epirus in particular, are likely to be served by the proposed territorial changes. Official statistics published in 1871 give 718,000 as the population of Epirus. Two-thirds of this number are Albanians, of whom about 250,000 are Mussulmans. The Vilayet of Epirus comprises five *sandjaks*—those of Janina, Previsa, Argyro Kastro, Berat, and Trikala or Thessaly. Janina, Previsa and Trikala fall within the frontier now claimed by Greece. The Hellenic element is undoubtedly stronger in the south of the Vilayet than in the north; but even if it predominates in the towns of Previsa and Trikala, it sinks into insignificance in the far larger towns Janina and Larissa. This "oppressed" population was in 1871 taxed at the rate of 17 francs a-head: each Greek of the kingdom pays about 25 francs a-year. Will the Hellenic inhabitants of the disputed districts appreciate this increase of their burdens? Will they esteem as cheaply purchased the sentimental pleasure of union with their kinsmen? Pos-

sibly: but what of the Albanian population of cities larger than any but two or three in the whole Greek kingdom? are they likely to reap ultimate benefits sufficient to compensate them for forcible subjection to strangers both in race and religion? Is the progress of Greece during the fifty-two years of her independence sufficient to justify the gratuitous cession to her of territory equal in area to two-fifths of her present dominions? A visit to the Ionian Islands throws some doubt over the advisability of such experiments. Ill-repaired roads, disused buildings and a diminished population, give outward evidence of the change of ownership. In the present instance strangers and not Greeks are to be handed over to the mercy of a democratic government. In England we are experiencing the blessings of a partial democracy; but in Greece all males of 21 years "possessing any property or exercising an independent profession" are electors—that is, there is virtually universal suffrage with all its attendant amenities of frequent change of ministry and want of political honour. To such a government Turkey is called upon to yield territory containing more than half a million souls. Because educated Greeks show a wonderful apparent aptitude for assimilating European ideas, it is assumed somewhat too readily that their government must be an unmixed blessing when contrasted with that of the Moslem. Unfortunately it is not the educated Greek who governs, but a semi-barbarous population, in comparison with which our lowest class of borough voters might be termed politically capable. Even putting out of dispute the right of the Greeks of Thessaly to demand annexation to their fellows, and

granting their unanimity in this desire, can the Porte be fairly blamed for manfully protesting against handing over Mussulman and Catholic Albanians to a foreign yoke? Can it be expected to lend its own weapons to amputate a considerable member of its own political body?

Yet for no worthier object than this has England run the risk of being embroiled in war; and that war one capable of almost indefinite extension. What is involved in an outbreak of hostilities between Greece and Turkey, M. Barthélemy St Hilaire's circular of December 24th most ably points out. Those who have pooh-pooed that statesman's fears may at least pause to consider the actual state of affairs in the East before putting aside his representations as those of a wild alarmist. The Balkan peninsula, still seething with the horrors of the Russian invasion, is occupied by half-formed peoples with interests mutually antagonistic, and animated by a spirit of bitter hostility to each other. All present chance of allaying these feuds vanishes before the reawakened agitation in that region. Firstly, there is Greece claiming territory which its Albanian inhabitants are ready to defend with the last drop of their blood. Yet these same Albanians, desirous of recognition as a nationality, have bound themselves together to resist the encroachments not only of Greece but of Turkey. And to further complicate the situation, this same race would probably take advantage of a general disturbance to strike a blow for the recovery of Dulcigno. Thus a third nationality, the Montenegrin, would almost inevitably be drawn in; indeed would probably enter the fray without provocation on the chance of picking something up out of the general confusion. Then we have

the autonomous Bulgaria drilled and governed by Russian officials, eager for the sentimental privilege of independence and the more substantial advantage of annexing Eastern Roumelia; while the agitators of this last province openly announce their intention of making the deluded population seize the earliest occasion to rise and claim a union with their trans-Hæman "brethren." Neither is it probable that the independent principalities of Roumania and Servia would be false to their predatory instincts, if a favourable opportunity arose of extending their borders at small cost to themselves. Under such conditions, is it to be supposed that Europe would remain a passive spectator? A universal conflagration in these districts would at once arouse the jealousies of those Powers who regard parts of the Turkish empire, like Constantinople or Salonica, as their own in ultimate reversion. Humanitarian Governments would feel bound to interfere in the inevitable anarchy that would ravage Asia Minor, even if regarding with complacency the equally inevitable massacres of Mussulmans in Crete, or Samos, or Roumelia.

The one good result of the naval demonstration was to demonstrate the superficial character of the European concert. Yet Mr Gladstone seems still to clasp the hope of realising his favourite dream, the spectacle of Europe united in arms against Turkey. Speaking at Oxford some three years ago to an audience composed wholly of educated persons, and mainly of gentlemen, he actually met the charge of cowardice, in dealing with Russia, by the assertion that he would have been ready, in alliance with that country, to advocate war with Turkey. The military coercion of a

poor weak people, undertaken with the aid of one or more of the strongest Powers in the world, might indeed gratify his chivalrous soul, but recent events show the improbability of his now satisfying these yearnings after the heroic. The partisan attitude adopted by the Prime Minister in every particular of the Eastern Question has effectually destroyed English influence with the Porte. But it has done worse; it has encouraged Greece in her untenable pretensions and infatuated conduct. Well may the 'Standard' correspondent at Athens write: "It is almost impossible to exaggerate the relief and consolation which the perusal of our last Blue-book has brought to the public mind in this country. The courage and hopes of the nation have been revived, and public opinion cannot find words to express its admiration and gratitude for the firmness and dignity displayed in the conduct of the British Government—the only Government, it is felt here, that has been faithful to the engagements it entered into at the Conference at Berlin." "What engagements?" we may well ask, in company with M. Barthélemy St Hilaire. That statesman, in his celebrated circular published in the above-mentioned Blue-book, aptly points out that mediation imposes no obligation either on the contending parties or on the mediating. If either of the former disapprove of the suggestions of the mediators, the work of the latter falls to the ground; their part in the drama is over. This patent truth, accepted by every other of the great Powers, is contested by the British Government; and while our Minister at Athens uses the language of common-sense and talks of "the provinces which they (the Greek Government) persist in believing have

been adjudged to them by the unanimous decision of the great Powers," he receives answers from Lord Granville, only intelligible as implying the existence of such an adjudication. Indeed he tells Lord Lyons that "the arguments used by M. de Mouy with regard to the decisions of the Congress and Conference of Berlin appeared to him to resemble those which had hitherto been used by the Turkish Government and its representatives." To which the French Foreign Minister very sensibly retorts that "he could not help thinking that the arguments in his despatch were sound and valid, whether they had been previously used by the Turks or not."

Thus Mr Gladstone's Ministry has stood aloof from the other Cabinets in declining to impress upon Greece the radical imperfection of her claims. This tacit encouragement has had the very worst result in so long supporting the grasping obstinacy of Hellenic statesmen. To the French proposal that the Turco-Greek dispute should be finally settled by arbitration, M. Coumoundouros answers: "Europe has on two occasions laid down a frontier; but by her present action in recommending Greece to seek an arbitration, she is urging her to abandon a sure position for one of absolute uncertainty, the only result of which must be to lessen the extent of what has been already awarded to her, and with which she is satisfied." The argument is bristling with fallacies; if the first recommendation, that of 1878, could be set aside to the advantage of Greece, why should the second recommendation of 1880, being of precisely similar character, be incapable of further modification in favour of Turkey? Again, why must the result of arbitration be necessarily unfavourable to Greece, seeing that impartiality is of the

essence of arbitration? In undiplomatic language the Hellenic Premier means to say: "We know that a hastily assembled conference, urged on by the Philhellenic zeal of Mr Gladstone, suggested a territorial concession which a more sober judgment pronounces to be unfair. Wishing to secure the strategic positions and Albanian towns, which we feel sure no impartial judges would now award to us, we reject all idea of arbitration."

To such a contention there ought to be but one answer: "Either accept what the Porte is willing to concede, or submit to arbitration, or take the consequences of a single-handed attack upon Turkish territory." All the other Powers joined with France in employing this language; England carefully kept aloof. Mr Corbett is instructed, while supporting the arbitration proposal, to "take care not to commit himself to any arguments which would lead Greece to suppose that her refusal of the proposal would entail the abandonment of her interests, although it is very desirable that this reservation should not be mentioned to the Greek Government." The same proviso, that Greece by rejecting arbitration is not to "lose the position she previously held," is repeated with emphasis in communications addressed by our Foreign Office to our ambassadors in the various capitals. The mere abstention from such arguments, when contrasted with their employment by the representatives of other Powers, must have been full of significance to so astute a race as the Hellenic; the open avowal of this reservation, within a few weeks of its being made,* has produced an effect even more than commensurate with its significance, as the

language of the 'Standard' correspondent plainly testifies.

Thus Greece has been all along encouraged implicitly, and now explicitly, to obstinately reiterate her own mistaken notions as to her legal position; but the encouragement has come from one source only—from London. Again, while all other foreign ministers were impressing upon her the ruinous nature of her conduct, Mr Corbett is never allowed to protest against the military preparations; except once, when a grudging consent to support the arbitration scheme is followed by instructions to our representatives at Constantinople and Athens, to "argue generally against a war which might be peacefully avoided, and more particularly against the danger both to Turkey and Greece of war, and even preparations for war, in the present case." This very formal piece of advice is given on January 1st; but writing on November 18th, Mr Corbett says: "In accordance with your lordship's instructions, I have for the last five months scrupulously abstained from giving to the late or the present Government any opinion as to the employment of force by Greece to obtain possession of the frontier recommended by the Congress and Conference of Berlin, though both M. Tricoupi and M. Coumoundouros were anxious to ascertain the views of her Majesty's Government on the subject, and both showed a disposition to be guided by their advice."

Throughout the whole of these melancholy negotiations the French Government insist upon the great power of the British Ministry for good or evil, and most instantly press for its co-operation—*e.g.*, M.

* January 10th.

Challemel - Lacour informs Lord Granville that "the French Government believed that the advice of the British representatives might exercise a most salutary influence on the two parties, from whom the request for arbitration ought to come." How has this universally acknowledged influence been exerted? By supporting Greece, against the opinion of the civilised world, in a course of action ruinous to herself, and big with future misery to the whole Balkan peninsula, and possibly to half Asia and all Europe. Mr Gladstone's Cabinet has declined to point out the fallacious nature of her claims, to dissuade her from arming, to warn her that it will not employ armed force on her behalf, or that her rejection of arbitration would entail the abandonment of her cause. The result has been a break-down of the well-meant efforts of France, and an obstinate insistence by Greece on obtaining what she wrongfully demands as her pound of flesh. Yet, as M. St Hilaire points out, it is no question whether she is to come empty-handed out of these long and wearisome negotiations. It is merely a question whether, from a free gift of some 8000 square miles of territory, a few hundred are, or are not, to be knocked off. In any case, without shedding a drop of blood — without the necessity of spending a single *drachma*,—she would have gained a fertile region, at least greater than one-third the whole of her present dominions; but, with short-sighted astuteness, she stands out for every acre, taking advantage of the known anxiety of Europe to avert the horrors of war. The firm language of united Europe would have checked her pretensions long ago: it may even now avert the final catastrophe. But will England be permitted to assist this

great purpose? What are we to hope from a Ministry led by a chief whose reckless utterances have stirred false hopes in every quarter of the globe? who, by his advice or conduct, is directly responsible for the refractory attitude of Greece, for a reign of terror in Ireland, for a disastrous outbreak in Southern Africa! who resists the encroachments of Russia by retreating before her, and accepts defeat at the hands of a rebel community numbering 30,000 souls! who, while thus neglectful of the honour and interests of his own country, does not hesitate to risk plunging her into war to support the sentimental claims of a small and troublesome people, with whom we have no direct connection! The moral and legal pretensions of that country have now been discussed. Looking to the future, we may add a few words in conclusion, reminding her admirers, and other members of the same school, that the Hellenic and Montenegrin are by no means the only nationalities to be considered.

For if Turkish rule be doomed irrevocably, the Albanian race, more numerous than the Montenegrin, has at least an equal claim to autonomy. The non-Hellenic inhabitants of Janina or Metzovo have an equally just cause for complaint with the non-Montenegrin inhabitants of Dulcigno or Dinosch. But then we must remember that the Albanians alone of all inhabitants of European Turkey stood stoutly by their Osmanli fellow-subjects during the Russian war. Yet they are not of the same race, and only partly of the same religion; they are not perfectly content with the Porte's government, as the formation and present attitude of the Albanian league abundantly witness. Nevertheless they forgot these differences, and would not

desert the Sultan in his sore need. And in this, perhaps, lies the secret of Mr Gladstone's indifference, not to say animosity, towards them; a loyalty which commands the sympathy of ordinary honest men, being by this master-casuist imputed as a crime, on the principle presumably that no faith ought to be kept with infidels.

Now this discreditable or at best unreasoning partiality for Christians of the Greek Church is strangely at variance with the frequent boast of "advanced" thinkers that the days of artificial boundaries and cabinet-made maps are over; and the recent action of the great Powers, wherein England was gladly permitted to assume a cheap and invidious prominence, belies that boast. Let us hope that action is not to be repeated. On the Mon-

tenegrin side of the question others must speak; but on the Hellenic we may ask what Greece has done to justify the confidence of European statesmen? Consolidation of nationalities is one thing, a Mezentian union of hostile races is another. When Greece has advanced in industry and agriculture; when she has put down her army, her navy, and her brigands, and has increased her police; when she has shown some appreciation of the elementary principles of political economy; when, in short, she has given some tangible proof of her oft-asserted superiority over Slavs and Osmanli,—then will be the time to set about the political absorption of these "inferior" races, and to indulge in dreams of a resuscitated Greek empire on the Bosphorus.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCLXXXVII.

MAY 1881.

VOL. CXXIX.

THE SWORD.

THE march of democracy is not limited to mankind alone; the uprising of *nouvelles couches* is not confined to the peoples of the earth; the undermining of the upper classes is not restricted to humanity. The dismantling of aristocracies is no longer a merely mortal operation; it has sapped away the bases of other privileges than those of princes; it has exterminated other prerogatives than those of blood; it has suppressed other rights than those of birth. The revolutionary spirit is swelling beyond politics and parliaments; its action is stretching outside societies, and is reaching above nations; it is pervading nature herself, and is even permeating matter. The subversiveness of our times extends to metals as well as to men; under its dissolving action—alas that we should have to say it!—steel has ceased to be a gentleman.

Until this nineteenth century, steel had retained its exalted place. It had been assailed by gunpowder, and it had been debilitated by the gradual diminution of duels, but it

had held its own; its superb traditions had not yet faded; the knightly sword was still its accepted expression, still its representative idea. It is true that steel—though used in Asia from all time—though seen, perhaps, in imperial Rome, and though introduced into Spain by the Arabs in the ninth century—had only been seriously known to Europeans since the First Crusade; it is true that the swords of Greece, of Spain, of Germany, of Gaul, contained no sign of it: but for the last eight centuries the world had learnt to associate the sword and steel together, and to instinctively regard them as implying the same conception. To-day, that stately unity has disappeared. The sword has been dethroned; and steel, meanly forsaking its former self, repudiating its lineage, its alliances, and its traditions, has gone in for demagogy. And we are the sad spectators of its fall.

What a superb career it has renounced! It had shaped the world; it had carved out history; it had formed the nations; it had fixed

the limits of languages and the geography of character and thought; it had vanquished the strong; it had rebuked the proud; it had succoured the weak; it had been the arbiter of honour, and the accomplisher of justice. The sword was, as the ancient chronicler said, "the oldest, the most universal, the most varied of arms; the only one which has lived through time. All peoples knew it; it was everywhere regarded as the support of courage, as the enemy of perfidy, as the mark of commandment, as the companion of authority—as the emblem of sovereignty, of power, of force, of conquest, of fidelity, and of punishment." And all this has steel abandoned—to become rails! Look at what it was, and at what it is. Its aspect was brilliant; its habits were punctilious; its manners were courtly; its connections were patrician; its functions were solemn; its contact was ennobling; even its very vices were glittering, for most of them were simply the defects of its superb qualities. It is true that it was sometimes cruel, and that its processes of action were distinctly sanguinary; but those reproaches apply to all other weapons too. Throughout the ages it grandly held up its head, and haughtily bore its name. It lost no caste when it allied itself with lance and dagger, with battle-axe and helm, for they were of its natural kindred; and even when, in later times, it stooped to generate such lowly offspring as razors, lancets, knives, and needles, the world saw no real abasement in the act, for the chivalrous blade was still the image which represented steel to man. But now its whole character has changed; now, it has thrown aside its gallantry, its grace, its glory; now, it has forsworn its pride for profit, its pomp for popularity. Steel is now bursting coarsely on the earth at

the rate of thousands of tons a-month. It is positively being made into steam-engines, and cannon, and ships, and all sorts of vulgar, heavy, uncomely, useful objects. Worse than all, it is becoming cheap! Steel cheap! The steel of old, the steel of legend and of story, the steel of the paladin and the chevalier, the steel of the noble and the brave, the steel of honour and of might, the steel that was above price, that knew not money and cared nought for profit—that steel is no more. It has been driven contemptuously out of sight by metallurgic persons called Bessemer, and Krupp, and Siemens, and these destructive creators have put into its place a nineteenth century substance, exactly fitted to a mercantile period, but possessing no tie whatever with time or fame.

No more will steel append its personal signature, its glaringly recognisable autograph, to the great events of history. The dagger that slew Cæsar, the glaive that Brennus hurled into the scale to weigh against the liberty of Rome, the axe that gashed off Mary Stuart's head, the knife that armed the hand of Charlotte Corday (of course they were not all steel, but they admirably represent the notion of it), are mere faded antiquities. Steel has other functions to discharge now; it has given up marking dates in the world's life, and has gone in for trade; it has ceased to be history, and has become actuality; it is in a state of new departure; it no longer incarnates a sentiment; it is nothing but a fact. It has turned its back on the blades of Damascus, on the armour of Milan, on the shields of Augsburg, on the rapiers of Ferrara, on the halberts of Flanders, on the poniards of Bilbao, and, at this very moment, is forsaking almost the last refuge which was left to

it, and is deserting the marvellous sabres of Japan. In the place of its former glories it is taking up all sorts of low associations; it is being manufactured in big furnaces; it is being "cast," as if it were mere clownish pig-iron; it is being rolled, as if it were uncouth "bar"; it is condescending to be boiler-plates, and axle-trees, and driving-shafts, and girders. To this is steel reduced.

In what else has evolution worked a sadder change than this? Where else has relentless progress stamped out a nobler past? Of course the present development of steel is very serviceable, and very commercial, and very profitable; and it is, perhaps, our duty to be delighted at it. But views and opinions are, after all, like religious faiths, affairs of temperament rather than of reason. Just as some people regret post-chaises, and just as some others mourn over the divine right of kings, so is it comprehensible that a few of us may deplore the disappearance of swords, and the desecration of steel. The feeling may be absurd, and it is certainly purely sentimental, and altogether impractical and out of date; but in a conservative country like ours, there is some excuse for lamenting the disappearance of landmarks, and never was there a bigger or more universal sign-post than the sword, for it pointed the road to almost all the ends of life. Men were what their swords made them. To be "as brave as his sword" was the highest aim of a warrior's heart. And yet the sword has vanished so completely that we can scarcely suppose the world will ever see it at its true work again. A lingering survivor of the family is still to be detected in the French duelling tool; but, with the exception of that pallid, sickly inheritor of a fallen crown, all direct descendants of the once mighty

race have died out. No one can seriously pretend that the soldier's sabre of to-day is anything but a bastard of the kin; it is a vulgar article of commerce—like skewers, or chisels, or nails, supplied by contract from Liège or St Etienne, from Solingen or Birmingham. It has no place in the glorious lineage of fighting steel; it is a mere article of military accoutrement; amongst the tools of actual war, it stands a long way below knapsacks, a little above chin-straps, and about on a level with shovels: it has been cast out into the cold shade by breech-loaders and rifled barrels; it has scarcely any blood relationship with the real sword—with the sword which was the one essential weapon of every man who fought. That trusty friend is gone for ever—an awkward instrument of inferior iron, which, like Charles the Second's promises, "no man relies on," has assumed its place. Never again will poets sing of puissant falchions, or of adamantine blades. The Balmung of Siegfried, the Escalibur of Arthur, the prodigious Mistelstein which expunged two thousand four hundred men, the Joyeuse of Charlemagne, the Flamberge of Renaud, the Altecler of Oliver, the Quersteinbeis of Hakon which chopped in two a millstone, the Tisona and the Colada of the Cid,—all these, and all their like, have faded into "dreams that tempt no more." Even Durandal, the epic Durandal of Roland, the wondrous brand that cleft the cliff at Roncesvaux, and left its yawning mark upon the Pyrenean crest, has flickered into night, and is bewailed by none. A rusty rough-edged bar, purporting to represent it, is shown to curious travellers in the Armoury at Madrid; and an equally veracious rival is exhibited in the Church of Rocamadour, in the department of

the Lot ; but the true Durandal is, of course, as the legend tell us, still lying in the waters into which the dying hero flung it, as the last blast of the Olifant expired on his lips, in the vain effort to call back Charlemagne to the field ; it is still, undoubtedly, at the bottom of the enchanted poisoned stream "which passed by there." And there, we may presume, it will remain, unless somebody finds it. No more will champions hew a foe in half at one wild sweep, as Godfrey and Conrad did to several Paynim in the Holy Land. No more will shields be split from top to bottom, as Renaud treated the buckler of the wicked infidel Sacripant. All that sort of behaviour is no longer in our ways ; we do not work so laboriously in conflicts now ; battles have become lazy, in company with most other acts of modern life. Like stone cannonballs, the rack, the toga, and cups of hemlock, hard hitting has passed out of our wants.

The ferocity of sharp strokes, the immensity of savage smiting, which constituted, for thousands of years, the essential characteristics of the sword, form, however, but a poor part of its vast story. There came into it, with time, new lineaments, fairer and nobler than these. By small degrees, as centuries passed on, the sword began to mount, its uses rose, its functions soared. It never ceased to be a slaughterer, for killing is the essence of its being ; but it grew to be a creator as well as a destroyer ; men made of it their great ennobler. Its touch upon the shoulder conferred the knighthood which soldiers longed to win ; and reverence for it waxed so deep that its simple presence on the hip was taken to be sufficient evidence that its wearer was, to some extent at least, a gentleman. It came to be

regarded as the one accepted emblem of manly pride, as the outer symbol of all that men prized most—their courage, their liberty, and their honour. The practice of disarming captives had naturally engendered the idea that to give up a sword was an act implying defeat, bondage, and disgrace ; and by a not incomprehensible extension of opinion, its possession was counted as indicating the exact contrary of all this, as constituting evidence that its wearer was undegraded and free, as supplying an unquestioned certificate of his liberty. It was the visible badge of birth, of bravery, of freedom. No other material object ever attained such a place in the eyes of men ; the sword stood absolutely alone in its honour-bestowing efficacy. The crown, the sceptre, and the robe of ermine were for the elect alone—even the spur was only for a narrow class ; but the sword was for large numbers at once, and it made no distinctions between its holders,—it treated them all alike, and rendered precisely the same service to each of them. This enormous power was, however, of slow growth. This highest of the attributes of the sword, this noblest of its privileges, was, after all, almost modern ; the earth got on without it for long ages. The Greeks and Romans (who only handled swords in war, and discarded them in peace time) knew naught about it ; they contemptuously scoffed, indeed, at the barbarians their neighbours for carrying weapons when they did not want them, and saw therein conclusive evidence of their savageness. It was not until a state of life was reached in which almost every man bore arms as a distinction, until the sword became a daily and cherished companion, that its value as a mark of personal position stood out complete. But when it did, at last,

attain the faculty of bestowing repute on all who touched it, it added a new and special glory to its previous splendours. Its legendary, historical, and political aspects, which were all stately enough already, became supplemented by another and a still higher phase.

And so the sword went forward, noble and ennobling, until another totally new life began for it with the sixteenth century. Until that period it continued to be the vehicle of honour and of blows; cleaving, slashing, mangling, and making gentlemen, were its perpetual occupations; and very grand they were—so grand, indeed, that they would have sufficed for any other lesser ambition. But the sword was not content; it wanted more. Before it died it seized a new and still more wonderful position. There came a day when it assumed another function, acquired another potentiality, and claimed another place. Radiant as had been the sparkling brilliancies which light up its regal history, a still brighter effulgence suddenly illuminated it about the time of Ferdinand and Isabella. That glorious epoch, so full of dates and memories, was the starting-point of further splendours which the sword, with all its accumulated majesty, had not yet known. In Spain, four hundred years ago, it was converted from a weapon of pure attack into a mixed arm of offence and defence combined. In contradiction to all its previous usages and aspects—which had been exclusively aggressive—it burst forth with a new complexion, and became a protector as well as an assailant. It remained the sword, but it replaced the shield; it lost no atom of its ancient powers, but it added to them new ones, which, so far, no one had suspected it of possessing. It unexpectedly duplicated

its operations; it went on being itself, but it simultaneously became its contrary. Never did the nature of things protest more strangely against its own essence. The destroyer set itself to save, the slayer to rescue. The sword had always possessed the cut and thrust; it obtained the guard and parry. Fencing was invented!

Fencing could have had no possible existence while bucklers were alive. It was, equally, an impracticability while armour was employed. But, when the ægis and the coat of mail had disappeared together—when the road was opened, without barriers, to each man's skin—when the ponderous glaives that hewed heavily through casque and cuirass had lost the reason of their being,—then the long thin *coutille* of the Germans—a prodding utensil, originally devised to find out holes in breastplates—was seized by the lithe ready hand of Spain, and swordsmanship was. In the first shape of the new invention the memory of the shield was too vivacious to be effaced; the rolled-up cloak upon the left arm supplemented the action of the blade, and comforted the combatant by the notion that he was behind a fortification. But this subterfuge died out, and the true fence of open onset and unaided ward appeared upon the earth, alone. The soldiers of Charles the Fifth carried the new science into Italy, where it was taken up with wild enthusiasm, and where it found its ablest professors. Profoundly Spanish in its origin and language, fencing became Italian in its teaching. "The great Tappa of Milan," as Brantôme calls him, was its first famous expositor; and the first scientific treatise on it, the well-known '*Arte degli armi*,' was published by Marozzo at Venice in 1536. The craft of swordsmanship dashed into life,

instantly great, suddenly magnificent—it stood abruptly before the world, as real an art as cookery or hairdressing. And then began the superbest moments of the course of the sword. Its noble day had fully come. The earth went mad about fence—as mad, almost, as if it had been a tulip, a furbelow, or a wig. And then it turned French (as many other fashions have done, before and since). When Louis Treize was king—when the Mousquetaires fought hourly duels in the *Pré aux Clercs*—when Athos and D'Artagnan (who happened on that occasion to be on opposite sides without knowing it) recognised each other in an accidental set-to on a pitch-dark night, by the manner of their swording,—then, most undeniably, France had grown to be the mistress of this new, cunning, and thenceforth her thirty-two-inch blade became the adopted combat-weapon of all gentlemen.

The sword at that moment reached its highest. The handling of it was a process by itself; nothing like it had been known before; it was of its own day and of no other. Of course, the method of employing swords had always varied with their shape and size; of course, the long swinging of the two-handed claymore was distinct from the short chopping of the Greeks; of course, the fantastic flourishing of the scimitar was other than the straight stabbing of the dagger: but the rapid lunging of the rapier, and the complicated double action of the sword and poniard, were absolutely new shapes of procedure, involving, for the first time, theories, principles, and rules. Thereon steel rose to its pinnacle; it reached its triumph; it attained its consummation. Its fall has been all the more immense. Its ruin has been more especially complete by reason of the very greatness of its fortune.

The vastness of its adversity would alone suffice to prevent our forgetting the sword; but we have additional motives of memory, for its suppression has brought about a severance of a very particular kind between the present and the past, and has produced a gap that nothing can fill up. Other ancient engines have disappeared, and none but archaeologists have sought for their traces; other venerable usages have melted away, and the world has gone on as if they had never existed; other antique fashions have died out, and no one has wept over them;—but the sword has left a staring vacancy behind it; its place remains untenanted; its functions are discharged by no successor. Its overthrow has entailed such vast and varied consequences, that it may really be counted, without exaggeration, amongst the events which have palpably affected and directed the destinies of humanity. Its effects have been felt in every land and every home; for the disappearance of the sword has radically transformed the character of war, and has largely modified the character of men. The sword was not a mere momentary weapon, like a catapult or a crossbow; it was not a passing custom, like breaking on the wheel or keeping a jester; it was not an accidental style, like wearing masks or building pyramids. It was an essence, a fact, a part of existence, a world's need; it outlived nations and centuries; it endured when all else changed around it. And yet it was not always the same thing—it varied largely with time and place; it made itself everything to everybody.

The discarding of this universal, indispensable, and perpetual weapon has brought about a transformation of two distinct kinds in the features of European war. Its material

result has been the almost total abolition of hand-to-hand hitting ; its moral outgrowth has been to change the nature of the courage which is required in soldiers, and to give a new form to the manifestations of that courage. With the exception of such cavalry charges and of such infantry rushes as result in a *mêlée* (and they are growing rare in the actions of to-day), there is an end in Europe of close quarters, and of the savage tussles which formerly made up almost the whole of a battle. Instead of delivering his stroke with his own arm, and within the reach of his arm, the soldier now transmits his blow through the barrel of his gun, to a distance of a mile or two ; instead of demolishing a personal antagonist, whose eyes are glittering at him two feet off, he knocks over an indifferent stranger out of sight. Strength, activity, and hard hitting are replaced by skill in shooting straight and in keeping under cover. Shelter-trenches have replaced single combat. Smart fighting consists now in slaughtering people you cannot see, and to whom you are yourself invisible : you lie down in a hole and aim at a puff of smoke somewhere in front, and try to detect the consequences through a field-glass. Whirling a two-handed claymore was less scientific than this, but it was decidedly more immediate and more personal. And furthermore, it was infinitely more murderous, which was a merit, inasmuch as the object of war is to slay. When armies got face to face, and man to man, they hammered at each other until scarcely anybody was left ; as is distinctly proved by the tremendous proportions of killed and wounded reported from the combats of the middle ages. At Poitiers, for instance, Charles Martel is said to have slain 375,000 Saracens. The suppression of

swords has certainly rendered warfare a good deal less destructive than it was ; and it has also considerably affected the nature of wounds ; but it is by no means sure that the world has really derived any advantage from that. It is possible, indeed, that we should gain immensely in the long-run by augmenting the abominations of war instead of diminishing them ; by rendering them so insupportably hideous, that nobody would consent to face them. If it were made a certainty, beforehand, that every fight would end, necessarily, on both sides, with the massacre of every man engaged, fights would probably become more rare. Instead of that we are going directly the other way, and are introducing a sort of affected gentleness into war ; we are pretending to make it a matter of cleverness instead of murder, by which we are incontestably corrupting its real nature and distorting its true position in sociology. War means butchery, and nothing else ; and the more butchery there is, the more does war present itself in its own character, and the less disguise and sham is there about it. The sword was straightforward and ingenuous ; every blow was meant to hack flesh somewhere ; it was all in earnest ; it was all savage, brutal, and monstrous ; it was all blood, and mutilation, and horror ; it meant all it did, and had no shame about it. But the theories and the processes of to-day are of another sort ; they have none of the simplicity and none of the frank honesty of the sword. Strategy (which means stratagem) has assumed the place of strength and struggling. The object of a campaign is to take the other people prisoners rather than to kill them. Little linesmen, who weigh nine stone, are fancied to be more fit for soldiering than brawny giants

are, because they have less weight to carry on a march, and can be more easily hidden away in a furrow or behind a bush. Physical power is no longer indispensable, for there are scarcely any occasions in which it can be used.

But these transformations in the nature of war, great though they be, are even less striking than the immense changes which have come about in the composition and the demonstration of modern military courage. We all well know what bravery used to be. In the days of steel the soldier very soon got up to his enemy, and went at him in person. The employment of distant arms, whether they were slings, or javelins, or arrows, did not keep armies long apart; they got together and battered each other. The sort of valour required for such fighting as that was of a very elementary and common sort; no training, no obedience, no discipline, no example were required to lead a man to combat when he was in personal danger, when his life depended on his own stoutness, and when he would be killed at once if he did not use his weapon to protect himself. And furthermore, he had the stimulus of physical exertion, of active effort and strife, of passion and conflict. His blood was up, and all his senses were concentrated on attack. He had no time to be afraid, and his entire case, corporeal and mental, was opposed to running away. In such a condition ferocity came of itself; it was an unavoidable, self-born result of the situation; all the aids to it were collected round the fighting man; all its sources were present in him, hard at work; he combated in battle as naturally as he would eat at table. There was no high courage in his doings, as we understand courage now.

The pluck that we ask from our soldiers to-day is of a very different

sort. It is indeed so infinitely other and so infinitely higher that it is scarcely possible to make a serious comparison between the old and the new shapes of valiance. The invention of long-range fighting has brought into the world a type of fortitude which has been hitherto totally unknown (excepting in occasional isolated cases), which is just as much a product of our century as railways or electric telegraphs, and which is as distinguishable from the animal courage required for sword-work as is prophecy from fortune-telling. Instead of dashing at the enemy in fierce excitement, instead of the hot emotion of savage struggle, instead of furious muscular exasperation, instead of the intensest development of the combative faculties, our soldiers have now to exhibit their intrepidity by remaining placid, motionless, undisturbed, amidst a hail of death and wounds. They have to stay quiet under distant fire, to let themselves be knocked to pieces, without the chance or even the possibility of doing anything whatever to defend themselves in an eager, efficient, satisfying form; the one solution open to them is to treat the other people in the same fashion, and to pelt impersonal missiles at them from afar. Not a man on either side has the pleasure of identifying the particular opponent who slaughters him. There is scarcely any of that individuality of carnage which is so contenting in hand-to-hand fight. And worse than all, there is none of the output of effort, of the bitter strain which necessarily accompanies the exhibition of brute hardihood. The bravery of to-day is a nervous contemplative process; there is no action, no movement, no tug about it. It principally consists in waiting obediently until you are hit by a chance shot.

Troops do not like it. They are always wanting to get out of it, to rush ahead, to strike, to do something violent and comforting on their own behalf. They feel that it is absolutely unnatural to stand still to be killed, that it is totally anomalous to rest unaggressive under a tempest of ambient peril, that it is contrary to all the tendencies of humanity to make no vigorous attempt to ward off destruction; and yet that is precisely what they have learnt to do. They may use shelter if they can find it (it is no longer cowardly to hide), but they may not use action. In one of Raffet's caricatures, a regiment is halted in the middle of a river, with the water up to the men's necks: the colonel says to them, "My children, I forbid you to smoke, but I permit you to sit down;" and that is very much the situation in which European soldiers are placed in battle now: it is permitted to be killed, but it is forbidden to fight. In Asia, it is true, there is still a chance of getting to close quarters and of using the right arm, as a good many of our people who have been in Afghanistan can testify. But in modern fighting on the Continent the rule is that the foe is so far off that no hitting can reach him. The consequence is, that our new shape of courage is based on the suppression of direct effort; it has become a passive process, in which we endure instead of acting. The old sword-daring was impetuous, emotional, and intuitive; the new gun-courage is deliberate, logical, and subjective: the one was material and substantial, the other is abstract and theoretical. They are as different from each other as credulity and faith, as astrology and astronomy, as dreams and thought.

Now, how has this strange trans-

formation come about? Where lies its root? Can it really be that it is solely because soldiers go to battle now with guns instead of swords, that this prodigious change in the character of bravery has grown up? Or is there another cause for it besides that one? The answers to these questions are not difficult to find. The influence of sword or gun is, certainly, at the bottom of them, but another and a greater action overlies it. The use of the sword was essentially personal; while the use of the gun is, as essentially, impersonal. The sword was the expression of the individual man who fought with it; the gun is a machine. Each sword had its own special manner of operating, its own particular method, according to the hand which held it; while each gun is but one in a total. The sword could not be wielded without liberty; the gun cannot be worked without system. The one means independence, the other means discipline; and there—in that last word—is found the true secret of modern courage. The swordsman was himself alone, therefore his qualities were positive; the shooter is a unit in a regiment, therefore his qualities must be negative. We see proof enough of that at every match. The men who win prizes are precisely those who are animated by the least emotion, who have reduced themselves the most completely to a condition of impassibility. The difference between the swordsman and the rifleman is as great as between the Japanese workman, who never reproduces the same pattern twice, but throws a fresh invention of his own into every object he fashions, and the Birmingham artisan, who goes on mechanically making the one same identical spoon or tray throughout his life. And yet, though the

independence of the sword is, manifestly, a more intellectual condition than the discipline of the gun, it is discipline, not independence, which has generated the loftiest type of courage that the world has seen. It is discipline alone which has popularised coolness, by enabling entire armies to acquire and practise it. Single examples of it have existed since history began; but it is in our day that, for the first time, hundreds of thousands of men exhibit stoicism together. There lies the reply to our questions. The actual shape of military courage is the fruit of a particular training, which has suppressed the importance of the parts by transferring it to the whole. That training was unattainable while the sword forced fighters to be individual. It has only become achievable since the gun has obliged soldiers to be collective. Here, at last, is a point on which the sword has to confess itself beaten.

But if it has to admit its inferiority as regards the quality of the courage which it provoked, it rushes to the front again directly we try to measure the influence it exercised on character. The gun has done nothing, absolutely nothing, to develop either qualities or defects in man. The peculiar new shape of bravery which has accompanied its adoption in war, is due, after all, to no merit in the gun itself; it is simply an additional example, evolved by circumstances, of that progressive substitution of the idea of duty for the idea of honour, which constitutes so vivid and so absolute a distinction between the motives and the objects of the past and of the present. The gun has in no way aided us to form our temperaments, our dispositions, our desires, or our capacities; its action on us, as a moulder

of our natures, has been null. But the sword, on the contrary, has been one of the most powerful of the factors which have contributed to shape the tenor of men, both in body and in mind. The work it did is self-evident: it stares us in the face. Its operation was so direct, so immediate, so personal—it went so straight to its end—there was such a total absence of hesitation or of complexity about it—that it would indeed have been astonishing if it had produced a less vast result. Of course the manner and the quantity of its action have varied largely with time and place; but that action was, in general terms, constant, until a century ago. Everywhere and always the usage of the sword has told, for evil and for good, upon a large proportion of mankind. Physically, its work was excellent: it stimulated activity, strength, rapidity of movement, dexterity and certainty of hand and foot. Morally, its doings were opposite and conflicting. In one direction it engendered self-reliance, the habit of resource, the consciousness of responsibility; a keen sentiment of dignity, of loyalty and of honour; the desire to protect the suffering and the weak; and a curious, fantastic, very noble generosity, proper to itself alone, which stands before us in history under the misty name of “the spirit of chivalry;”—but in its other bearings, it bred irritability, bullying, provocation, violence, the vainglory of force. In all these resultances, however, composite and even contradictory as they were between themselves, the sword invariably maintained, unchanged and unchangeable, the great striking characteristic of its form of proceeding—it was uniformly and persistently personal. It acted on each man separately; it guided one to the right, another to the left.

Never did it proceed by groups ; the absolute individuality of its teaching was the most remarkable of the many features it presented. It was a private tutor, not a school-master.

Well, this energetic educator has been suppressed. Its peculiar lessons have ceased to act upon us ; the influence it exerted has vanished ; it no longer prompts us to good, or pushes us to evil. We have become free to act as we like, without any of the guidance which, during centuries, the sword imposed on Europeans. Have we lost, or have we gained, by the cessation of that guidance ? The majority of us would probably declare that we have largely gained : that the sword was a blusterer, a bully, and a tyrant ; that an incubus has been lifted off our backs ; that we have escaped from a domination and a cruelty ; and that we are well rid of the intimidation of steel. But a minority would perhaps proclaim that the sword performed a moral function, and exercised a social action ; that it was not a mere swaggerer, a mere despot, or a mere killer ; that it did service upon earth by forcing men to respect each other ; that it kept up the sentiment of mutual responsibility as no other external agent has ever sustained it. Some of us might indeed go further still, and assert that, since the downfall of the sword, the notion and the practice of deference and of manners between man and man have palpably diminished ; that the conception of honour has grown distinctly feebler ; that an undeniable development of the meaner instincts has supervened ; and that, if hectoring and violence have decreased on the one hand, punctiliousness, courtesy, dignity, and fair name have still more ebbed away on the other. And all this may be said without the slight-

est desire to defend duelling. It is the abstract idea of the sword, not the practical misuse of it, which lies at the bottom of such thoughts as these. The sword, with all its faults, was a gallant gentleman ; and there is neither folly nor exaggeration in maintaining that, when a just balance-sheet is struck, the world comes out a loser, not a winner, by its discomfiture.

All this, however, is only the moral and sentimental aspect of the subject. It has a material side as well, which, though it is far less interesting, would form an even bigger part of it if it were set forth in its full proportions. Its dimensions are indeed enormous. Never has any manufactured product exhibited more elastically than the sword the faculty of adapting itself to circumstances ; even clothes have scarcely been more multiform, even houses have hardly been more sundry. The sword has been made of many sorts of matters and metals : of stone, of wood, of bone, of copper, of brass, of bronze, of iron. It has assumed deviating shapes and profuse sizes ; it has been short and long, heavy and light, straight and curved, wide and narrow, pointed, round, or square, tapering or expanding, sharp on either side, or on both, or on neither. There have been, in each European language, at least thirty different names of breeds of swords,—from the horseman's huge *espadon* of six feet long, to the garter stylet of six inches. The catalogues of armouries, and the special books on weapons, contain so many details, so many descriptions, and so many distinctions of types and sects and characters, that no enthusiast can pretend to know them all. Specimens have come to us from all the hiding-places and all the countries, from tombs and caves and river-beds and ruins, from under ground

and under marsh and under water, from Mexico and Persia, from Scandinavia and Japan, from ancient Dacia and Peru, from Africa and China, from Rome, Assyria, and Ireland, from Switzerland and Denmark, from Germany and Sicily, from everywhere and anywhere, and other places. The earth, the lake, and the stream have disgorged their swallowed specimens; the sepulchre and the temple have given back their offerings; the buried city has unclutched its relics; the battle-field has rendered up its vestiges. And from all these subterranean pillagings the museums have grown full. There is the Greek sword, so curt that it was little more than a large knife, pre-eminently fit for scrambling, hacking, strenuous stabbing at unflinchingly close quarters. There is the Roman sword, of differing lengths, almost as various, indeed, as the countries it conquered. There is the Gallic sword, of such soft pliant metal that its users had to stop in fight, after each hard blow, in order to straighten it under their feet, thereby enabling the enemy to knock them over uncontestedly. There are the hooked scimitars of the Turks, with an inside edge, and the curved Arab yataghans, with the edge outside. There is the cross-handled sword of the Crusader, with which he prayed and slew alternately. There is the weapon whose pommel served for a seal, like that of Charlemagne, who said, when he used it to put his stamp on treaties, "I sign them with this end, and with the other I will take care that they are kept." There are Dutch, Russian, Portuguese, and Moorish swords, each one of them with a type or detail proper to itself. There are the glaives of red-clothed headsmen of the middle ages; there are Malay *krisses*, and the notched blades of

Zanzibar, and old sabres (the parents of our contemporaneous tribe) from India, Armenia, and Khorasan. There is the *espada* of the Spanish *matador*, the *schiaivona* of Venice, the Albanian cutlass, the Kabyle *flissa*, the Turkish *kandjar*, the Court sword of a century ago, the claymore of Scotland. There are all the incalculable assortments of German, Spanish, and Italian swords. All these, and a thousand others, are to be found in the collections, with their capricious varyings of blade and handle, of pommel, spindle, and hilt, of inlaying and engraving, of complicated basket-guards, of every sort of ornament and complement and supplement that can be added to an implement. Damaskeening, particularly (which is the incrusting of gold and silver into iron and steel, and which, though said by Herodotus to have been invented by Glaucus of Chio, and though cultivated by the Romans, was not seriously practised in modern Europe till the fifteenth century), gives a remarkable beauty and artistic value to many swords; it is perhaps, indeed, the most distinctive and the most graceful of all the adornments which have been lavished upon them. And the scabbards! Why, they form a special race: if they were not, by the essence and condition of their being, a mere adjunct to something else, they would occupy a place of their own in the world. Their sorts and shapes are so many that they are beyond arithmetic.

Then there are the inscriptions on the blades. They almost constitute a literature, in poetry and in prose. For the most part they are brag and bluster; but here and there some few of them are pious, wise, or silly. The mighty glaive of Conrad Schenk of Winterstetten (4 feet 8 inches long, and 4 inches

wide), which is in the Dresden Museum, bears, in antiquated German, the tenderly swaggering advice — “Conrad, dear Schenk, remember me. Do not let Winterstetten the Brave leave one helm unleft.” The sword of Hugues de Chateaubriand flashed in the sunlight the noble motto won by his ancestor in the fight at Bouvines, “*Mon sang teint les bannières de France.*” In the Erbach Collection is an old Ferrara blade, with the sage device, “My value varies with the hand that holds me.” A sword in the Paris Cabinet de Médailles, is reverently inscribed, “There is no conqueror but God.” The rapiers of Toledo were engraved in hundreds with the wise counsel, “Do not draw me without reason, do not sheathe me without honour.” The invocation of saints are very frequent; and so are prayers, like, “Do not abandon me, O faithful God,” which is on a German sword in the Az Collection at Linz; and ejaculations, like the Arabic, “With the help of Allah I hope to kill my enemy.” There are vaunting mottoes, like the Spanish, “When this viper stings, there is no cure in any doctor’s shop;” and pompous announcements, like the Sicilian, “I come;” and critical observations, like the Hungarian, “He that thinks not as I do thinks falsely;” and matter-of-fact declarations, like, “When I go up you go down” (only that is on an axe). This “cutler poetry,” as Shakespeare called it, presents itself all over Europe, in all languages, mixed up with the maker’s address or the owner’s arms. And so, if you go to Toledo now and buy a dozen blades for presentation to your friends at home, you have their names engraved upon the steel, with some sonorous Castilian phrase of friendship and gift-offering.

As for manufacturing details,

properly so called, they are (with one exception) too technical to be talked of here; they interest nobody but blacksmiths. All that need be said about them is that the secret of a modern sword lies exclusively in the tempering, and that almost each maker has his own fashions and his own tricks. To make steel sharp, it must be hard; to make it elastic, it must be tough. Cast-steel gives hardness, shear-steel gives toughness, but in no ordinary process can the two qualities be united. So, excepting at Toledo and one or two other places, all actual makers have abandoned the attempt to produce elastic blades, and have gone in for edge alone. There is, however (or, more exactly, there was); a treatment which really does unite the two contrary capacities in the same blade. The curious product called damask-steel possesses them both, and all the great Eastern swords owe to it their celebrity. It is true that the art of damasking (which is a very different matter from the damaskeening alluded to just now) has lost its use since swords have ceased their service; but still it looms out with such distinctness in the mechanical part of the history of swords, it occupies so large a place in its atmosphere, that it is impossible to pass it over in silence. It constitutes the exception which has just been mentioned.

All steel which exhibits a surface figured with lines is called damask, but the true oriental product of that name united extraordinary interior qualities to this generic exterior aspect. It combined two distinct classes of merit. First, as regards its inner nature, it was so ductile and so malleable that it could be hammered cold; yet it became “as hard as tyranny” when tempered, and took an edge

as sharp as the north wind ; and, with all this, was as supple as whalebone, so that no accident could break it. Secondly, as regards its external appearance, it was covered with meandering lines like water-marks ; its hue was grey, brown, or black, and presented, over all, a varying sheen, blue, red, or golden. The quality rose with the size, the shape, and the clearness of the lines. In very high class specimens they were an eighth of an inch thick ; when they were only as wide as ordinary writing they were not regarded as really good ; and if they were scarcely visible they were altogether contemptible. Pattern was as important as size : straight parallel ribs constituted the lowest type ; as the lines curved the merit rose ; it went on increasing with the multiplicity of twists ; it became admirable when ruptures of the marks appeared, with dots between them ; it was distinctly noble when the lines were so contorted and so broken that they formed a network of little threads, twisted in different directions ; and it attained its highest possible perfection when those threads assumed the shape of chevrons or of bunches of little grapes, spread equally all over the blade. If, to these particularities of pattern, a deep dark ground with a true golden gloss was superadded, then the work was a masterpiece, and was worthy to have been made at Damascus.

These definitions were laid down some thirty years ago by a man who followed out the art of damasking to its inmost mysteries—who made himself its apostle, and preached its creed. This enthusiast—Colonel Anosoff, manager of the imperial factory of Zlatoust in the Urals—succeeded in reproducing the true oriental damask—at least he obtained steel of such striking character, and of such beauty and merit,

that it was not possible to detect any difference between it and the most finished old Syrian performances. The lines which his work showed were in the metal itself, and could not be ground out of it ; his colour and prismatic lustre were altogether perfect ; and he frequently (but not always) united extreme hardness and extreme elasticity in the same specimen. He made some swords which would bend till the point touched the hilt, and which would also cut through an iron bar. More than this no blade can do, or ever has done ; and the same two faculties have never been conjoined in any other steel than damask. There are swords now made in Europe which will sweep a gauze in two in the air ; and at Toledo, every day, blades may be seen packed in coils like watch-springs. But no metal can be persuaded to do both unless it be damasked, and not always even then.

To attain these results, Colonel Anosoff tried several processes of manufacture, and reached fair results with most of them ; but his best work was effected by mixing pure native graphite with the highest quality of iron, using dolomite as a flux. A good many minerals are known to possess the property of damasking steel, but none of them to the same extent as graphite—so far, that is, as European experience extends. It is, however, almost certain that the great Asiatic steels were obtained by some unknown process of mere tempering, without any special mixtures ; unless, indeed, Nature did the adulteration herself, which is possible, for Faraday thought he saw in many Eastern specimens faint traces of something more than pure iron, carbon, and azote, which is the composition of chemically unsophisticated steel. In the Indian

“wootz” steel, for instance, which possesses remarkable toughness and sharpness, he fancied he found aluminium. But no analysis of oriental swords has revealed any really perceptible difference of ingredients between them and ordinary modern products. The water used for cooling may, not impossibly, have had a share in the work; for it is well known that its particular character exercises a clearly recognisable influence on the metal chilled in it. When the Toledo factory was removed to Seville, to keep it out of the hands of the French during the Peninsular war, the quality of the steel fell instantly, and rose again on the return to Toledo—showing, according to all the judges, that the Guadalquivir did its business less well than the Tagus. In the same way the dyes for the Gobelin tapestries are said to owe their infinite delicacy of hue to the effect of the Bièvre—a little stream which is employed in their preparation; and the beer of Allsopp and of Bass to be what it is, because it is made of the water of the Trent. Anyhow, whatever may have been its fashioning, the Asiatic damask-steel was far away the best material for swords that the world has ever seen—for it would cut through most obstacles, and could be fractured by none.

Even the amazing sabres of Japan, despite their bewildering sharpness, cannot compete with damasked blades, because they have no elasticity. They are as hard as diamond; they take and keep an edge so ideally acute that they will go through a pillow or a poker as if they were air. If you hold them vertically in a river the leaves that float down with the current will, unknowingly, cut themselves in two against them; they flick off a man's head with a twist of the wrist; you can shave with them;—

at least all this is said of them, and very possibly it is true. But, stupendously as they cut, they can do nothing else; and they are heavy and double-handed, and awkward to use by foreigners. In their own country, however, they have been so cherished and so prized that some of them have been deified, and have had temples built to them. It is true that this happened a long time ago, when the sword, the mirror, and the ball were still revered as the three treasures sent from heaven with the first ruler of the country in 700 B.C. But though the sabre soon ceased to enjoy the advantage of becoming a god itself, it continued always to be regarded as a worthy offering to other gods, which explains why so many of the finest specimens have been preserved in the temples. Yet, with all this adoration of them, the manufacture of swords developed slowly in Japan. Until the end of the fifth century Chinese and Corean blades were considered to be better than the local products; and it was only on the creation of the Ministry of War in A.D. 645 (has any other land a War Office twelve centuries old?) that a Government arms factory was established, and a stimulus given to the trade. From that date it grew rapidly. The famous Yastsuma invented new processes of treating steel; and in the eleventh century the Japanese swords exported to China aroused such admiration that a notable wise man of the period composed a poem, which is still popular, to celebrate their merits. About the year 1400, the illustrious maker Yoshimitsu, and his followers, carried the manufacture to the highest perfection it ever attained. From that date it progressed no further, but it remained active and prosperous, because, as every gentleman wore two

swords, the demand was large and constant. The destruction of the feudal system by the revolution of 1868 has suppressed swords in Japan as they had already been uprooted in Europe; henceforth those wonderful razors will only be found in museums, side by side with mummies and stuffed birds.

And when, from the cold standpoint of those museums, with all enthusiasm chilled out of us by catalogues and glass cases and rust, we look back at the career of swords in their totality—when we consider them as things of the past with which we have no longer any concern, excepting as curiosities—we see even more plainly than before the main outlines of their record, and the salient features of their work. The stages of their history stand forth distinctly; the periods are as clearly marked as the rows of seats in an amphitheatre. First comes the pure carnage epoch, elementary and ruthless. Then follows the legendary era of impossible feats of arms, stupendous and puerile. Next arrives the feudal time, devout and murderous, with its curious mixed processes of religion and butchery, and the simultaneous sentimental elevation of the sword to the sovereign place of fountain of honour. After it springs up the noble season of fence, gymnastic and superb. And, finally, there is the downfall, sad, ah sad! Through these five ostensibly registered terms the sword travelled unceasingly on-wards and upwards, till it had completed its allotted evolution and reached the plenitude of its development. It followed out its varying destiny to the end, attaining, before it fell, a glory of fulfilment which no one, certainly, foresaw in the days of its uncouth youth, when naked savages splintered each other with flint choppers.

But the radiant completion of its imperial course presented certain local disparities; it was not equally magnificent all over Europe. It attained its fullest perfection only in the countries where chivalry was established, and even in them there were visible differences from land to land. The ideal conception was not the same everywhere; the psychological sentiment shifted; the creed fluctuated; and, above all, the external expression veered about. So widely, indeed, did all this vary, that, strange to tell, in the North the sword was either male, as in Britain, or neuter, as in Germany (where, indeed, girls are neuter too); while in the South it was uniformly female! What a discord of appreciation is revealed by this single fact! And what consequences resulted from it! The elegance, the poetry, the graceful dignity of the sword were incontestably most ripened on the sunny soils of France, Italy, and Spain, where it was feminine; while its force, its overwhelmingness, and its harshness, found a more congenial place in the colder regions, where it was masculine or neuter. Of course, in all this, national temperaments made themselves felt. Latitude and climate and genders were not alone at work; local character, local usages, and local necessities assisted to bring about local deviations: and, between them, they made up a very perceptible collection of variations. And yet all these external influences, numerous and contradictory as they were, never got beyond mere details; they were purely superficial in their action; not one of them ever told upon the real intrinsic fortune of the sword. Surrounding circumstances never exercised a substantial effect upon that fortune. They altered shapes, or names, or sizes, and they changed views, impressions, and fancies; but

they went no further. Even natural laws, universal and irresistible as is their domination, were powerless to affect the fate of steel; they had to make an exception in the case. The sword persisted in being as independent of their sovereign puissance as of mere local conditions of life: it scoffed at predestination and order, and proclaimed free-will and liberty. Headlong, impetuous, and dazzling, it furnished a wonderful example of Pelagianism and Molinism in their application to matter; and there were no St Augustin and no Jansenists to preach against it. Unlike the motion of light, the growth of potatoes, the orbits of planets, and everything in general, the reckless blade alone has always been unregulated by principles. The eternal edicts which steer all other substances whatever, which govern comets and earthquakes, the sun and electricity and sound, apple-trees, diamonds, and rain, and ordinary things of that sort—which make them do what they do in the way they do it, simply because they cannot help themselves—have had no grasp whatever upon swords. Politics, and headache, and appetite, and all other human weaknesses whatever, have to be submissively obedient to the great central guiding forces; but the sword has acknowledged no higher volition than its own. It stands alone as the successful defier of Nature and her laws. It has always been itself,—unchained, enfranchised, and heroic, the archetype of arrogant audacity, of fantastic spontaneity, of resplendent freedom.

And really it did not make a bad use of the wild liberty it arrogated to itself. It went fairly straight along its vagabonding road, and did not yield too contemptibly to the seductions and temptations

which surrounded its steps. It was neither too haughty nor too capricious—neither too cruel nor too childish. It is true that Clotaire II. did slay all the Saxons who were taller than his sword (which makes us hope they were a small race); but Procrustes went through the same curtailing proceeding with his bed; and we might as well accuse beds in the one case as swords in the other. No, decidedly; the sword used its vast power well. Its memory is not that of a tyrant; it scarcely ever lost the consciousness of its high estate, of its duties and responsibilities; it felt that *noblesse oblige*, and behaved accordingly. With what can we seriously reproach it? What has it done that was particularly disgraceful? Or, more exactly, what has it done that was more disgraceful than what everything else around it was doing every day? More people have died of the sea than of the sword, and with quite as much unpleasantness of treatment; but nobody has ever presumed to blame the waves for that; they have simply carried on their legitimate business, which is drowning. And the sword has similarly followed its own calling, and has made holes in people to let out their lives, that is all. In every other of its acts it has been so high and admirable that mankind instinctively adopted it as the natural and essential symbol of lofty thoughts. The list of the attributes which have been conferred upon it includes nearly all the generous aspirations of which the heart is susceptible; and it must be remembered that it possessed them not merely in its representative capacity as an emblem, but to a great extent also in its effective being as an achiever. The proverbs of all nations (which are the truest measurers of popular conviction) speak of it with reverence and

trust: it was everywhere regarded as an all-sufficient type and token of the higher sentiments and higher tendencies of men. It was only by exception that it became sometimes associated with low longings or with vulgar thirsts. It inspired poets, bards, and troubadours; it was the theme of glorious song, the burden of true tale, the subject of strange romance. The blood which dripped from it did not defile it; it remained almost unceasingly and almost universally, the "good sword;" its fair fame never faded, excepting for short rare moments. How, otherwise, could it have held, for thousands of years, so supreme a place, as the model, the sign, and the expression of all that men most hallowed? How else could it have reached and kept so marvellous a position of ideal nobility, so splendid a height of illustrious personification? It represented almost all the ambitions, the exaltations and the prides of men. Fame, courage, and glory; rank, dignity, and renown; greatness, victory, and truth; majesty and honour,—have all been incarnated in the blade of steel, have all been expressed by its pregnant name, have all been contained in the suggestive ideas which it conveyed. What other word in language has had such meanings? What other image has betokened such import? What other sign has pointed to such associations?

With such a prodigious function

as this, the sword seemed destined to immortality, for it was difficult to conceive that men would be able to do without an assistant whose uses and whose senses were so all-applicable. And yet the immensity of its position did not save the sword. All this magnitude of meaning, all this significance of symbol, all this accumulation of elevated thoughts, served for nothing when the day of ruin came. They cannot be forgotten, but they go back further from us each day. The poetic aspects of the sword have already become legendary: no one selects it as a figure now; it is a sword, in our time, and nothing else. Steel is no more to us than lead or putty; it is, like them, a substance used in manufacture, and the generation of to-day would no more think of assigning virtues to it than of conceiving that putty can make love, or lead teach swimming. The change which has fallen on the sword is not a mere cessation of business—it is a stoppage of life. The sword is no longer either a weapon or an idea; we no longer fight with it, we no longer think with it, we no longer respect it.

It had remained from the beginning until yesterday; and then it became mortal and died. It is gone: and when we stand in armouries and gaze at the relics which testify what it once was, we say, with a sigh, in spite of common-sense and commerce, "A great soul has passed out from amongst us."

A FRENCH SPECULATION.

CHAPTER I.

It was a bright Sunday afternoon in the early spring, and all the little world of Blois was disporting itself on the promenade by the side of the river Loire. The scene was very gay: under the long line of trees a band of stringed instruments was labouring through an elaborate valse. The performers were amateurs: they belonged to a choral society got up by the organist of the cathedral, among the young and enterprising *bourgeoisie*; and the affair had proved a great success. As they played now, the admiring eyes of mothers, sisters, and pretty cousins were on them, and they did their best and looked their best, as became their important position!

A little apart from the band sat groups of elder ladies, chatting among themselves, watching their portly husbands and slim daughters promenading round the musicians; among them little children trotting about, daintily dressed, and *bonnes* with large white coifs on their heads and knitting in their hands. Over all the sunny sky of France, blue, bright, and gay, smiling through the tender green of the young foliage, and reflecting itself beautifully in the fair river.

Truly they seemed a happy and contented people these honest *bourgeois* of the old town, full of their own concerns, and apparently well satisfied to be so. Among a group of *gros papas* who stood chattering together, and leaning on the parapet, stood two men, both of whom seemed graver than the others. The elder of the two was a man of some importance in the

town, the owner of a well-known and popular inn "La Pie Blanche." No one was more respected than Monsieur Auguste Benoit; he and his family were most highly considered. Monsieur Benoit was about the average height of the French *bourgeois*, a liberal five-foot five; he was stout, or rather round; his prominent waistcoat was adorned by a huge gold watch-chain; he wore a massive ring set with a carbuncle, on the first finger of his right hand; his hands were fat and dimpled, and tapered to finely-pointed fingers. Monsieur Benoit's face was good-nature and *bonhomme* itself; it was round and large, smooth shaven but for the black moustache. He was bald on the top of his head; the hair behind was black as jet, and so close-cut as to throw two large thin ears into loud relief. His ample double chin rested on a black satin cravat. His dress, from that cravat to the tartan trousers in folds on the hips, and tapering to the very small high-heeled boots, was perfection. Such was Monsieur Benoit on the promenade on Sunday, but to-day the shade of gravity sat on him in an unwonted manner.

Monsieur Benoit's companion was a man who might have been any age between thirty-five and fifty. He belonged to a different type altogether from his friend: he was tall, and very thin; his hair was fair and sprinkled with grey; he wore a short, fair beard, which partly concealed the restless movements of an eager, mobile mouth; his eyebrows also were constantly moving, and his eyes restless, bright, and searching; he was,

despite this unrestfulness, a handsome man, with straight features and a well-made figure. He was Monsieur Legros, formerly a highly successful *avocat*, now retired upon his laurels, with his money invested in a new and startling investment. That restlessness was the restlessness of speculation; in his little office, in old days of hard work, Legros had been a much calmer man.

That such a man as Camille Legros ever had time or thought to spare for matrimony, was an astonishment to his acquaintance; but so it was. Affairs of importance had taken him to Blois, where he had hired a room in "La Pie Blanche." Madame Benoit herself always presided at the head of the *table d'hôte*, and on her right hand sat her daughter, Mademoiselle Blanche, so named, people said, after the celebrated "Pie." Before Monsieur Legros had dined three times at *table d'hôte* he had determined to make Blanche his wife. He was a man who, during a busy life, had hardly given a passing thought to women. He was, like most Frenchmen, a devoted son to his widowed mother; but perhaps it was his experience of her that had so completely lowered his conception of what a woman should be, that he expected in a wife a pretty nonentity—a creature not to trust or to share his confidence, but a useful housekeeper, and a credit to his taste in good looks. He was not in love with Blanche Benoit: he did not know what love was; and he demanded her from her father with a strong sense of the good match he was offering her, and that the obligation would be all on their side. Monsieur Benoit demanded a fair statement of his proposed son-in-law's finances before he would agree to the betrothal. It was given. Camille Legros was too absolutely confident in the success of his great schemes to conceal

anything. Benoit was impressed by the size of the fortune, but somewhat startled by hearing that it was all invested in one vast speculation, the building of a little fashionable watering-place that was to rival Dieppe, Dinard, or Etretat in its attractions.

"You are sure—you are quite sure that the situation is one that will be popular?" asked the inn-keeper, anxiously.

"Sure! I am certain," cried Legros, shrugging up his shoulders and tapping the map over which they were bending with the back of his hand. "What more can one wish? The air is magnificent; an unbroken *plage* of hard sand; the view exquisite; in the neighbouring inland town advantages of education, of market, of medical attendance; the railway has agreed with me, for a consideration, to run an additional train from Paris; there are quarries close at hand, from which I draw my stone; it is well adapted to building purposes; labour is cheap just now; I have capital,—what more can one desire?"

"It sounds well," said Monsieur Benoit, musingly. He was dazzled by the talk, by the ready money, by the certainty of Legros; and after a conference with Madame Benoit—for he did not share his future son-in-law's views about women—they agreed to give him their only child.

Blanche was told, and was quite satisfied; she had not thought much of the future, leaving it with perfect confidence in her parents' hands; so she was neither surprised nor disconcerted when Monsieur Legros was presented to her as her future husband; and she smiled a very pretty little smile, and made the set little speech her mother had taught her with so charming a grace, that Legros was enchanted. Blanche was charming: she was

tall and slight; her face was a perfect oval, her complexion clear and white; her eyes very large and dark brown, fringed with thick dark lashes—as thick and long at each end of the eyelid as in the centre; her dark hair was cut short on the forehead, in the fashion of the day; the mouth beautifully shaped, tender, mobile, wondrously sweet in expression, but betraying something of childishness and immaturity, which befitted her seventeen years.

That Sunday afternoon at Blois was the day preceding the wedding, and Blanche and her mother were seated together for the last time listening to the band.

"That is Jean's violin," said Blanche, touching her mother's hand. "Listen, mamma."

They sat on a bench, Madame Benoit stout in black silk, Blanche all in white; and a violin solo was played in the orchestra.

"He plays well, the little Jean," said Madame Benoit, complacently. "Thy cousin has talent, Blanche."

Yes, he was playing well, the poor boy,—playing on his own heart-strings this evening; for was not Blanche to be married to-morrow, and what should he have to live for—he, the forlorn collegian of nineteen—when his fair cousin was gone? and she never guessed it. Alas, poor Jean!

The solo ended, there was applause. He fancied he could hear her little hands joining in the applause, and he stole away out of the group of musicians, and came and stood beside her wistfully.

By-and-by an evening breeze began to stir the river; it became chilly; Madame Benoit rose.

"Oh, not yet, not yet, mamma," said Blanche, regretfully. "I should like to linger yet a little while."

"Then go to papa, my child. I must go in, to be in time for the omnibus that comes from the train.

I cannot neglect my possible travellers;" and she hurried away. Blanche went over to the parapet where her father stood.

"We are going to take a walk, *mignonne*," he said,— "Monsieur Legros and I."

"Perhaps Mademoiselle Blanche would wish to come with us?" said Legros, courteously.

"May I?"

"We are enchanted."

"But how about our conversation and business, *mon cher*?" said Monsieur Benoit.

"See!" cried Jean, advancing eagerly. "If these messieurs will allow it, I will walk with my cousin; we will follow you; we shall converse; we will not interrupt you; we shall be happy."

There was a pathetic ring in the last words of the boy that struck Legros. He looked at him keenly, and then at Blanche; but he only said, briefly, "*Soit*," and they started on their walk.

On the opposite side of the river lay the little suburb of Blois, which is called Vienne. It is an insignificant little place, lying in a flat, low country, intersected with open ditches. Quite across these flat fields ran a long spine, formed by a narrow road on an embankment, just sufficiently wide to allow of trees being planted on each side of it; the rank grass and thick bushes growing up the sides of the embankment shut in this little road, and made it very quiet and green. The views now and then through a gap in the trees and undergrowth were charmingly pretty, showing picturesque old Blois, with its piled-up buildings and high steps; the river below; behind, the wide country, and a low crimson streak of setting sun.

"The last time, the last time!" said Jean in a low earnest whisper, as the two followed the elder men at a short distance behind.

"No, no; not the last time.

Many and many a time shall we pace this promenade again," said Blanche, gaily. Only to the boy it was the very last time.

Beautiful yellow dragon-flies flitted across their path. One alighted on Blanche's white gown, and she had leisure during one brief second to admire it. Then bright blue butterflies, brilliant as a patch of sky, flitted to and fro. A little damp and very green, with a faint sweet smell of marshy plants below, this walk was a perfect paradise for lovely and rare insects.

Monsieur Benoit and Legros recked not of the brilliant insect-world, save when a blundering common dragon-fly in his steel-blue armour bounced against Monsieur Benoit's face, causing him to emit a hasty expression of impatience. They were deep in business. It was a subject that had been, so to speak, already talked threadbare; but this terrible Camille Legros would come back to it again and again. Blanche would have an excellent *dot* after her father's death; but till that occurred, nothing—"not one *sou*," said the good man energetically.

"But see, my good friend," urged Legros over and over again, "I am nearly as old as thee, and we are not either of us old! *Ma foi*, no! I tell you two thousand francs *now* would be of more value than twenty thousand after you are no more."

"No, no; ask me no more. After all, my friend, this grand affair of yours at St Didier, it is but a speculation; and if it fail, you will then have this snug little nest-egg of Blanche's to fall back upon. I know what I am about—*va!*"

"Less than this has broken a marriage, *mon cher*," said Legros, somewhat gloomily.

"Break it! break it! Only it must be done to-night, my friend," said Monsieur Benoit. "To-morrow it will be too late;" and he proceed-

ed to light a fresh cigar. Legros walked on thoughtfully for a few steps. He was afraid to show how he longed to obtain possession of some of the promised money, or how valuable it would be to him at this moment.

"A truce to joking," he said suddenly, clearing his brow. "If you are determined, there is no more to be said. Break off the marriage! *Peste!* With me it has become an affair of the heart."

"And when you have once conversed with Blanche, it will be still more so," cried her father enthusiastically. "I know it is not etiquette, but would you like to walk home with her now?"

"I should," said Legros, smiling a little. Monsieur Benoit turned round: "Jean, Jean, my boy."

Jean joined him, and he passed his arm through his and walked on. Monsieur Legros stepped back, and placed himself by the side of his young betrothed. "You are fond of flowers?" he said, observing that her hands were full of them.

"Yes, monsieur."

"There are flowers at St Didier, and I am planting them, making gardens everywhere."

"Yes, monsieur."

"Have you ever been away from Blois?"

"No, monsieur."

"Then you cannot imagine St Didier. All is new, new, new. None of those crumbling streets and mouldy buildings. All is fresh and bright, and the houses are very gay—some painted pink, and some green and white. And there is a casino, which will be very gay when the place is full of *locataires*. See, here are the plans," and he drew a roll from his pocket. "That is the great hotel, and there is the English church with a spire, and here is an artist's studio; and on the cliffs gay villas, with gardens running down to the sea."

"It must be charming—charming, monsieur."

"What are they doing, Jean?" asked Monsieur Benoit, pressing the arm of his young cousin. "It would not be discreet for me to look, but thou—thou mayst look."

What were they doing? Jean's heart failed him, for he thought of

what he himself would have been doing—whispering honeyed words, stealing loving looks from shy, downcast eyes. With hot impatience he looked back.

"Ah, bah!" he said. "You may look, monsieur, without the smallest indiscretion. He is explaining to her the plans of St Didier."

CHAPTER II.

The courtyard of the "Pie Blanche" was very gaily decorated the next morning—scarlet cloth over the pavement, festoons of leaves and flowers all round the windows, and a magnificent motto in scarlet and white over the archway leading into the street. The bridal party had been to the Mairie at eight o'clock in the morning, after which they returned to the hotel, to emerge in full splendour at half-past ten.

All the busy laughing and chattering ceased when the procession was formed. They went two and two,—the bride and her father at the head, Blanche dressed all in white, with her flowing veil hiding her blushing face—all the other relations arm-in-arm behind; three bride's-maids each with her cavalier; the mother leaning on an uncle; all the friends; the ladies dressed in the height of the fashion—fawn-coloured silk, cream-coloured satin and brown, Bismarck *enragé*, *prune de Monsieur*, *noir corbeau*, *sang de bœuf*,—all varieties of colours; their hair frizzed, their heels two inches high;—the gentlemen in full evening dress, cut-away coats, white waistcoats and gloves, with exquisite bouquets in their button-holes.

As the last of them passed under the archway, the two old waiters who were left behind each flicked the napkin in his hand with a somewhat discontented flick.

"I wish mad'demoiselle was not

going so far off, Battiste," said the younger of the two, who might be sixty. "Oh la! la! we shall miss her sweet face." "Yes," answered Battiste, ruefully. "And her monsieur is a queer sort of man, never gives one a look or a word, and sits up night after night over his accounts, like one that is not certain which side the balance will lie."

"Umph!—well, the old 'Pie Blanche' will be something solid for mad'demoiselle to fall back upon, anyhow; we do well, *hein?*"

Up the narrow picturesque streets, up flights of stairs, mounting the hill, the procession at last reached the cathedral. With one of the bride's-maids leaning on his arm, a simpering girl in blue, came Jean, and as he walked his heart grew heavier. When they reached the great western door he could bear it no longer, he could not see Blanche given away to this stranger—it would break his heart. There was a pause at the entrance, congratulating friends pressing round, and among them Jean slipped away, leaving the aggrieved bride's-maid to do as best she might.

The cathedral stands on one height of the picturesque old town, and on another height the castle. Behind the cathedral is a dark, tree-shadowed old garden, with a parapet from which to view the lawn beneath, the flowing Loire, the great gloomy walls of the old Châ-

teau de Blois. The old trees grew closely together, and even with their young spring foliage made a thick impenetrable shade. The garden of the old Evêché it is called: but when Jean went into it with his sore heart, there were no dark-robed priests pacing its alleys; it was complete solitude, the cathedral bells clanging a joyous marriage cadence which smote on his ear. He flung himself on a low stone bench, hid his face in his hands, and waited. It seemed an eternity. When it was all over, there was a joyous movement and murmur. He emerged from the old garden, and was just in time to see them come out, bride and bridegroom first, bowing, smiling, shaking hands. His Blanche! no, she was his no longer—she belonged to Camille Legros. It was all over, all over, and he wished that he was dead.

The sun should shine on a wedding-day, it is true, and very sunny was Blanche's wedding-day; and it is equally important that it should shine on her first entry into her new home, but unfortunately it did not do so. The Legros remained for about a week at Blois—a week which seemed interminable to the bridegroom, who felt it a grievous waste of time—a week full of mingled disappointment, happiness, and grief to Blanche. She was dreadfully afraid of her husband, never sufficiently at ease with him to let him have any insight into her real character and the intelligence of her judgments and opinions. Her conversation was limited to monosyllables, her remarks to interjections. He pored over his plans all day, giving vent to such vivid descriptions of the charms of St Didier that Blanche formed a most brilliant conception of what her new home would be; and finding that that subject pleased him best, grew bold enough to ask a few flattering

questions about it. Unluckily the questions were not easy to answer. For instance: "Will it not be difficult to have any privacy among all these people, monsieur?" She had yet to learn that the people were still to come. Then, "I am glad my new gowns were made so much *à la mode*. Who sets the fashion at St Didier, monsieur?" and so on,—Monsieur Legros, blustering a little, and talking of the coming "season" and the present dead time of the year.

Blanche had one of those clinging natures who cannot live without loving some one. A very few gentle words, a very little affection, from her husband in the first days of their marriage, sufficed to make her love him; but it was with a timid, deprecating love, easily subdued, and very shrinking.

It was a grey, cloudy, windy day when the bride first saw her new home. The journey was a tedious one, with many changes. Blanche had wept bitterly on leaving her home and her parents for the first time. Her head ached; she was confused by the unknown bustle of travelling, and longed, poor child, for a kiss and a kind word; but Legros was not a demonstrative man. She took refuge in the thought of the charms of the new home, and of the welcome that awaited her from Madame Berthe, her husband's mother, who lived with him, and had hitherto managed his household. They reached the station, transferred themselves and their baggage to a very shabby-looking one-horse omnibus, and were soon started on their way.

The country was flat and green, with no interesting features whatever. By-and-by, as they drove on, it grew colder and colder. A sharp north wind blowing over the sea, there was a fresher smell and taste in the air; but Blanche was so tired that she could hardly keep

awake, and her eyes closed again and again. Monsieur Legros showed her some little tenderness then. He put his arm round her, and drew a shawl over her knees, and looking at the pale, beautiful little face, which almost rested on his shoulder, felt a thrill of gratification and pride. Suddenly a tremendous jolt awoke Blanche, followed by leaps and jerks, as if they were passing over heavy ruts.

"We are arriving! look up, Blanche!" cried her husband, in an excited voice. They were passing up what seemed to be an embryo street—the road not yet made, the houses all detached from each other, and in different stages of development. They turned a corner, and now faced the sea; a sudden sweep round, and they drew up before one of a row of houses which faced the beach, and appeared more finished than the others. Monsieur Legros was eagerly gazing out of the window; with a bound he leapt out of the carriage.

"Excuse me, *ma chère amie*," he cried, suddenly. "But I see such mischief going on in that villa yonder—all the painting wrong. One moment only;" and without a moment's pause he had darted away, leaving her startled, bewildered, not knowing what to do.

"Madame had better descend," said the coachman; "I have a long way to drive back."

"Yes, yes;" cried Blanche. She got out, had her trunks removed from the roof of the carriage, and watched the man mechanically, as he rang the bell, and left her, driving off without waiting to be paid.

The young bride stood on the threshold of her new home, and the tears gathered fast in her eyes. She drew her shawl more closely round her; the wind was tearing it from her, and it was very cold.

It seemed a long time before

the bell was answered. The door opened, and a little withered old woman in a loose wrapper appeared.

"Who is it?" she asked, in a shrill voice. "My *bonne* has gone off, and left no one at home. They are all alike these *bonnes*; but Rosalie is much the worst—*oui, dame*, much the worst."

"It is I, madame—Blanche Legros," said the poor, little, weary, trembling bride. The old woman gave a little cry.

"Ah! Madame Camille! my boy's rich wife! Come in! come in! And where is he? where is he? When didst thou arrive?"

She held out her hands, embraced Blanche warmly, and retreated through the house, uttering shrill calls—"Rosalie! Rosalie! silly one! quick, quick, Rosalie! Madame Camille is come, and we not expecting her this hour or more."

Rosalie appeared at last, and, helped by the two ladies, drew in one of Blanche's boxes. The others being too heavy, were left outside for the present.

In a few moments they were seated in the *salon*, and Blanche had leisure to look about her. The drawing-room and dining-room were one; only divided from each other by a curtain, which was drawn back. Both were somewhat scantily furnished—a few hard-backed arm-chairs, a round centre table; a very large alabaster clock, with vases to match, on the mantelpiece. Blanche's eyes took it all in at a glance; then she stooped over the very small fire of damp, hastily kindled logs. Madame Berthe wore broad carpet-slippers; she rested the bellows on the wide square toe, and blew away at the faint sparks in the grate while she talked.

"So Camille left you at the very door! That was just like him, his

whole heart he has thrown into this place with his money. *Dame, oui!* his whole heart and his whole fortune. So he saw something wrong, did he? Well, how could it be expected otherwise, when he had been away more than three weeks? All the workmen ceased to work, and idled about all day; the coachman drove out his friends in the carriage. A lady and a gentleman came and looked at villa La Rochelle, and nothing came of it. Wasted chances! wasted chances!"

Blanche hung her head, she felt guilty of this sad waste of time. Madame Berthe rubbed her hands with a little chuckle.

"But the season is coming on—the fine season," she said, "when all the world will be here, and St Didier will be as gay as Dieppe itself—a little Paris, indeed."

Time passed on, and Camille Legros did not come in. Weary, faint, and exhausted, it seemed to Blanche as if the chuckling talk of Madame Berthe would never end. At six o'clock came dinner, but she was too tired to eat. When it was nearly over her husband came in; there was a cloud on his brow she had never seen before.

"Everything has been going wrong," he said, tucking the end of his napkin under his chin, and devouring great spoonfuls of soup. "Jean Marie has not looked after the men. The work at the *châlet* is where I left it. The walls of the villa No. 3 are not a foot above the ground. I have lost two good lets. Truly, I should never have been away."

Blanche winced again; he went on grumbling about neglect and carelessness, while Madame Berthe watched him, nodding like an old bright-eyed bird with her head on one side. After dinner he went out again,—not a moment given to sentiment, not a caress to his young wife.

When he was gone Blanche pleaded to be shown her room, and was taken up-stairs.

"Good night, sleep well," said Madame Berthe, with a friendly nod; and she went off, muttering to herself.

"He has chosen well—she will look very well on the promenade; much too fine a lady to look after the *ménage*. Yes, yes; we will go on as before, and her money will keep us all straight till the *locataires* come!"

Blanche unpacked the ivory crucifix that always hung over her bed, placed it at her head, and then lay down, too utterly weary to realise that she was not happy to-night.

The next morning Blanche was up betimes, eager to see everything, and make acquaintance with her new home. It was a great pity that the sky continued to be of one uniform dull grey colour—that the sea was restless and sullen—and the rocks and islands, which made the coast so picturesque, were half shrouded with mist; but a good night's sleep had refreshed the little bride completely, and renewed all her bright castles in the air.

Madame Berthe's welcome to her this morning was far less cordial than it had been the night before, and a little startled Blanche; but she soon forgot it in watching her husband eat his breakfast, and ministering to his wants to save time, for he said he had but five minutes to spare, and nothing must keep him waiting. Before he had swallowed his last mouthful he was off, and Blanche and her mother-in-law were left alone.

"My husband is always busy like this?" asked Blanche, timidly. Madame Berthe nodded.

"And need he should be," she said, grimly. "It will take all his energies to keep things going."

"But are they not going well?"

cried Blanche, very much startled. "I thought everything promised so wonderfully."

"There is a vast difference between promise and fruition. It is a great fortune my son lays out, and we must wait, wait—*oui, dame*, we must wait to realise any profits."

She began to take away the coffee-cups as she spoke, and for the moment Blanche did not speak,—then she said, timidly—

"Will you tell me something about my husband's affairs, dear madame? I have been told nothing."

The old woman looked at her sharply, and hesitated. "I think," she said, "that if they had thought that you were to be trusted they would have told you all about it."

The tears rushed to Blanche's eyes.

"I am to be trusted," she said, pleadingly.

"Well, then, I may as well tell you. At present, Camille is embarrassed for money. Don't start and turn so pale, my dear," she said, harshly. "Of course it is only a momentary embarrassment; but he has placed his whole fortune in this affair, and of course it demands time, much time even."

"But has he no partners? does no one share the outlay and the risk?" asked Blanche, with a little of the shrewdness of her commercial birth.

"No one—no one," said his mother, her voice growing shrill. "Every Saturday he pays his wages, two francs a-day per man, and a hundred men are working on the place now; and besides that, for the houses that are furnished there are the *menuisiers*, the *vitriers*, the *tapissiers*. Oh! the money flows night and day; and every house on the place must be let well and for long before it can do more than even pay the interest of this fortune. And you," cried the old lady, harshly,—“you, who might have helped

him, have failed; and his very marriage has turned out a wasted opportunity: the poor boy has no chance!"

"What do you mean, madame?" cried Blanche, shocked beyond measure.

"I mean, of course, that when a man makes a marriage he expects to find something; not that his wife should bring him nothing, her hands empty."

"And I? have I nothing?" faltered Blanche.

"Nothing; actually not one *sou* till your good father's death. Bah! he is not five years older than Camille himself."

"And then?"

"Ah, then! but what will it avail—double, treble the *dot* then—when my Camille is a millionaire? It is now, now, now!" she shrieked; "when money is going out on every hand and none coming in. *Va! va!* thou also art a failure, *ma bru!*"

Blanche burst into tears, and fled away in grief to her own room.

In the afternoon she timidly ventured down-stairs again, terribly afraid of meeting Madame Berthe. The door of the kitchen was wide open, and she could not help hearing some of the conversation from within. Her mother-in-law was speaking.

"Yes, yes, Rosalie—a helpless fine lady. We will go on just as we did before; we must make our economies, thou and I, just as we did; and I will teach Madame Camille to put up with them too. Yes, yes; why should she not? she brings nothing to the *pot-au-feu*."

Blanche went boldly into the kitchen with a sudden impulse.

"I will make any economies you will," she said, sweetly; "anything to please you and to save money."

"Ah, bah!" said Madame

Berthe, contemptuously. "Professions are all very well, but when it comes to actions——"

"You will not find me wanting," said Blanche, with gentle dignity; and she left the kitchen. Madame Berthe hurried after her, and, catching hold of her arm, she said, eagerly—

"But see! see, *ma petite bru!* they say your father adores you. Write to him, tell him you want money; he will send it to you."

"I will. I will tell him how important it is just now for monsieur—that it will be of such service."

"You must not! you shall not!"

"But what, then, am I to do?" cried Blanche, bewildered.

"Tell him you want it for yourself; tell him you find that you must make great toilets here; that you want a piano; that—that,—there, can you invent nothing?"

"No," said Blanche, quietly; "I can invent nothing. I must tell the truth, or I will not ask."

"But you will keep all our conversation secret? you are to be trusted. No, do not look offended; but if any one knew that Camille has begun to borrow for his week's wages, that would be the end of St Didier."

"Of course, I will say nothing;" and Blanche drew away her arm and went out of doors.

The grey fog was still over everything, a wet sea-fog, so that the water dripped off all the houses and saturated everything. In the distance Blanche caught sight of her husband with his collar turned up round his ears, and the perpetual cigar in his mouth. She went up to him; she forced herself to smile and speak gaily as she joined him.

"Will you show me the town now, Camille?"

He was quite pleased. "Ah!

you are like an Englishwoman," he said—"not afraid of the weather."

"I am generally," she said; "but not to-day, for I want so much to see St Didier."

There was a square garden facing the sea surrounded by houses, and from each corner of this square ran two boulevards of detached villas, each with a tiny little garden running down to the cliff, from which a small flight of steps led to the beach. These houses were in all the varied stages of completion, but swarming with workmen. The newly planted trees were struggling into leaf. All round were the commencements of buildings. The English church, which had been so prominent a feature in the plans, was just one foot out of the ground. The Casino was completed, and was gorgeous. Young gardens and a lawn-tennis ground were marked out and planted with baby-trees, all top-heavy with their large-leaved, scanty foliage, and dripping with the salt sea-fog.

"Are any of the houses taken yet?" asked Blanche, timidly.

"Yes; that house is occupied by a very rich American lady, but, oh, so exacting,—she has asked for so much, and I have given her all—everything," he cried, throwing out his hands. "It shall be said of me that no landlord ever was so amiable, or gave so much." The house he pointed out was one of the largest in the place, and looked somewhat older than the others. A very magnificent lady was standing at the window. She beckoned to Monsieur Legros.

"I must go in," he said, discontentedly. "I am sure she wants something more from me."

The lady beckoned again, and Monsieur Legros went in. Blanche waited patiently till he reappeared on the steps of the house, accompanied by the lady.

"So that is Madame Camille?" cried the latter, in a strong foreign accent, and Blanche found her hand warmly clasped.

"Your husband is the best landlord I know, madame," she went on. "I have had much experience, and have never met with a kinder

one. He has just promised me a conservatory, but it shall be worth his while."

And all the time Monsieur Legros continued making obsequious bows; but when he walked on with his wife he ground his teeth.

CHAPTER III.

The houses sprang up—a faint smell of fresh-painted *jalousies* filled the air—the sea and sky grew blue—all the golden gorse bloomed, paled, and died—the time of lilacs passed—and two dim Judas-trees which adorned the Casino gardens burst into their leafless flower. The season ought to be beginning soon. Monsieur Legros worked harder than ever. Morning, noon, and night he was out in pursuit of his workmen. One day a tenant arrived in the shape of a weary, old, grey-headed man. He rented one room, *au-cinquième*, of the small *pension* which was just finished, and wrote up a modest little placard, announcing himself as a music-master.

"It is well to be first in the field," he said to Blanche, "in a great future success like St Didier." And Monsieur Léon was added to the prospectuses as a famous singing and music master.

Then the moment came when the hot summer rush takes place from towns to the seaside, — Dieppe, Dinard, and Etretat, began to fill rapidly. Every day the St Didier omnibuses went to meet the trains—every day Madame Berthe and Blanche stood with beating hearts to watch them come in. Often they told each other that the carriages were full—quite full; and then it would turn out that it was a picnic party from the town, or tourists who would sleep one night at the hotel.

One day Monsieur Legros said suddenly to his wife, "I suppose, in writing home to your father, you have told him all about our circumstances?"

"No, never, Camille," she answered. "I have kept your secrets. I knew that these things are important in the commerce."

Monsieur Legros bent down and kissed her.

"Then do this more for me, *m'amie*," he said. "Write to him; paint the whole thing in the brightest colours. I do not want you to say more than the truth, of course—but tell him the promise of it all; that I am said to be the best of landlords—that the place is getting on and becoming known."

"I have told him of our hopes, Camille; why should you wish me to say more?"

Monsieur Legros hesitated a moment, then he gave a little impatient stamp.

"For a *bourgeoise* you are wonderfully dull, *m'amie*. Do you not perceive that I want him to invest some portion of your future fortune in this manner?"

"Ah! but I fear that I could not advise him to do that," said Blanche, gravely. Her husband scowled at her, and she shrank away trembling. A few moments after she saw Madame Berthe catch hold of his arm with her claw-like hands and ask in a hard whisper—"But what did she say? will she do it?"

"Not to save me from prison," he answered bitterly, and her very heart ached as she heard the words.

The days passed on, and though the season had come, the gay world had not yet appeared. Everything bore a prosperous look; all the men were paid to the day; the further extravagant demands of the American lady were acceded to without a murmur; the English church was completed;—but no one as yet came to stay.

One day receiving a packet of her husband's letters from the postman, Blanche found one directed to herself. It was not a very common occurrence; her parents wrote very rarely, and her old school-friends were capricious correspondents. She turned the letter over and over again in her hands, wondering from whom it could be. Monsieur Legros caught sight of the handwriting as she did so, and started.

"Who has been writing to you, Blanche?" he said quickly.

"I do not know—I was wondering."

"Perhaps you had better give me the letter," he said quickly. Then seeing her look of astonishment, he added—"No, no; read it yourself."

She opened her letter and read; presently she looked up with a little cry.

"Camille," she said, "Jean writes to tell me that his uncle, the great *épiciér* at Nantes, has died and left him a fortune of 5000 francs a-year. Ah, but that is good news!"

"Does he say any more?" asked Monsieur Legros, rather huskily.

"Yes, yes, I have not finished yet," and she went on reading. Suddenly the colour forsook her face, leaving it ashy pale, and she looked up suddenly. "Camille, you knew this; and you have asked this poor boy for his money."

"I have advised him as to its investment, certainly."

"This must be stopped," cried Blanche. "He must not be ruined; he, an orphan!"

"You do not know what you are talking about, madame," shrieked Madame Berthe, suddenly joining in the conversation.

Blanche rose to her feet; there was a dignity in her graceful figure they had not seen before; she swept her hand past, showing the rows of houses: "See," she said sadly, "are they not all empty?"

"Yes, and empty they will remain as long as you conspire to ruin us," cried Madame Berthe, nodding her head up and down. Blanche turned piteously to her husband, but in his face was no sign of relenting; he looked dark and sullen.

"You will not ruin this poor little Jean?" she said.

"What do you wish?" he cried suddenly. "I have no power in the matter; I merely told him how in five years he can make 50 per cent on his money. If he choose to accept it, so be it; it is no affair of mine."

"It must be stopped."

"Who will stop it?" cried Legros, fiercely.

"I will." And poor Blanche could bear no more, but sank back in her chair white and gasping. Camille Legros was livid with rage, but he controlled himself with some difficulty, and did not speak. Madame Berthe, unhindered by her son, poured out a torrent of abuse and violent language. In vain Blanche turned her pathetic eyes from her angry mother-in-law to her husband, he offered her no protection, and after a moment or two he grew tired of the shrill voice and strode away.

Presently Madame Berthe changed her tone, and this was even more

difficult to bear. "You will not ruin your husband, *ma petite bru*?" she whined. "He works so hard and hopes so much, and now all is ready, the great work is nearly accomplished, and only a little money—a very little money—wanted to keep all afloat till the tenants come; and it is a certainty—do you not see it is a certainty of success? there can be no doubt whatever about it. You whom he loves so much, and whom he took without one penny in your pocket, surely you will not turn against him?"

"But see," cried poor Blanche in despair; "why do you say all this to me? Have I not as much interest in St Didier as yourself? Would not your ruin be my ruin also? But I must think of Jean—the poor little Jean who has neither father nor mother to care for him, and who has always been as a child to the 'Pie Blanche.'"

"But when Camille himself tells you that he will guarantee him eight per cent."

"Alas! alas!" sighed Blanche.

"Then you will not hinder him?" persisted Madame Berthe.

"I must! I must!"

She broke away from her mother-in-law and went out—anywhere out of the house, she thought, as she went down the steep steps down the face of the cliff to the sea. It was a wild, gusty day; the wind nearly blew her off her feet, and sand filled her eyes and mouth.

"Life is not very happy," thought poor Blanche. She hated the sea with an unacknowledged hatred—the bustle and fuss of it—the constant changes. She was not accustomed to them, and they had no charms to the little *bourgeoise* who had hitherto spent so calm and monotonous a life.

Presently she found a sheltered spot, a sort of cave hollowed out of the rock. She was out of the wind

here, and she sat down and smoothed her hair and recovered her breath. The whole conversation she had just gone through was most painfully distinct upon her memory. She clasped her hands before her eyes and prayed that she might have strength to do what was right—that she might not shrink from her duty, however painful it might be to her. She must write to Jean and warn him of the difficulties St Didier was contending with—of how likely it was that a great *faillite* was at hand. She knew that she could trust her cousin, and that he would not betray her secret to any one. Then she rose up and went home comforted.

Blanche had no wish to write secretly, or to do anything underhand, but her task was more difficult than she had anticipated. Madame Berthe set herself as a sort of spy upon all her actions; she never left her for a moment except when Legros was at home, and Blanche knew that Rosalie had orders to stop any letter she might write.

She grew pale and thin from the constant anxiety, and her sleep was broken and feverish. At last she contrived to write her letter unseen, and now came the difficulty of posting it. She adopted at last the simplest mode of all. Walking home from church on her husband's arm, she quietly posted it in the letter-box.

"What letter is that?" he cried suddenly.

"My letter to Jean," almost whispered Blanche, in great terror. He almost threw her off his arm and walked off alone. Poor little Blanche stood for a moment dizzy and aghast. This seemed like an insult before the whole congregation. Two peasant-women passing nudged each other, and one or two rude boys giggled and whispered.

With burning cheeks, and eyes so full of hot tears that she could hardly see her way, Blanche went slowly home.

During the next two days her husband hardly spoke to her; and she had a sense of guiltiness towards him that she could not throw off, and that was intensely painful.

About a week later Blanche received an answer from her cousin. When her husband took the letter from among his own, her heart beat so fast that she hardly knew how to bear it. He handed it to her without a word, and she could hardly summon up courage enough to open it.

Legros watched her from under his eyebrows; but he could make nothing out from her countenance, for he did not understand its varying expression. At last she started up and handed him the letter. She stood beside him with glistening eyes and clasped hands, saying eagerly, "Oh, I am so glad—so glad!"

He read it slowly: "My dear Blanche,—I am infinitely touched by the goodness of your letter to me, and of the frank warning you give me against insecure investment of my little fortune; but in this matter I must have my own way, in spite of the worldly wisdom of your advice—for which I thank you with my whole heart. Of course I realise the risk; but sometimes some thousands of francs just at the right moment will turn the scale and save the whole affair. I have an impression that this will be the case at St Didier, and that before many years are past we shall all be millionaires. Present my compliments to your good husband, &c."

This was the letter. When he had read it, Legros put his arm round Blanche and kissed her. Madame Berthe was less forgiving.

"Ah, ah!" she muttered; "so

you did not quite succeed in your little calumnies after all, *ma bru*."

Preparations for the tenants who were not forthcoming continued even more actively than before. Legros became almost reckless in the additions he made to the comfort of each house: curtains and sofas and chairs arrived from Paris; clocks and ornaments.

One morning the American lady was discovered to have gone—disappeared in the night; and nothing more was heard either of herself or her year's rent. Still Monsieur Legros was as sanguine as ever; but as the summer months wore on, his head became plentifully streaked with grey.

Monsieur Léon stayed on. How he kept body and soul together, perhaps Blanche could have told better than any one else; but his little rent was paid punctually to the day, and he threw himself headlong into the scheme. "It is always well to be first in the field in a grand new 'enterprise,'" he repeated, with almost as much belief in St Didier as ever. When all hopes of letting for the bathing season was over, Legros let freely to a strange set of people, without care or precaution with regard to character or even appearances. The little town soon swarmed with questionable Parisians, who enjoyed themselves beyond measure, and paid only a nominal rent.

"It is intolerable," grumbled Madame Berthe. "But at all events they air the new houses."

It was a great relief to Blanche when they went away, and all the shutters were put up, and the winter drew near again.

"I wish I could help you, Camille," said she, wistfully, one day, putting her hand timidly on his arm.

"I think it must be the want of a theatre!" he cried. "I will build one."

"Oh no, no! not yet. Have a little patience."

"You always try to restrain me," he said, rather fretfully. "Don't you see that one must do one's utmost now? and we have no middle course—we must sink or swim." And the theatre was talked of, and planned out roughly that very night.

Camille began to suffer both in body and mind from the long-continued strain of anxiety and disappointment, and the winter set in. New prospectuses were sent out, the houses were offered at the most tempting prices for the winter. The price tempted one or two very poor families with many children; but when their term was up, the damage that had to be repaired encroached much on the small rent.

But with spring, courage came back, and even Blanche herself seemed to arouse suddenly.

"You will let me help you this year, *mon ami*," she said, eagerly.

"I do not see what you can do," was the gloomy answer.

"I will do my very best," she said, gaily. "But first of all, may I take a journey all by myself?"

"By yourself!"

"Of course I shall take a *bonne* with me."

"She can have Rosalie of course," said Madame Berthe, to whom Blanche had confided her little scheme, which was a very slender one indeed; namely, to go to Tours, and dine two or three times at the *table d'hôte* among the many English—to travel perhaps a very little from one town to another, and try to lead attention, already turning to the seaside, towards St Didier. It was a chance. Blanche reckoned on her powers of description, and on the certainty that, if she could only get the people to come, they would stay. Madame Berthe reckoned on her daughter-in-law's beauty and winning manner, though she

did not say so; and she also felt certain that to see St Didier was all that was necessary.

To Legros naturally the plan appeared entirely childish and even absurd,—this was not the way business should be carried on; however, he good-naturedly yielded to their wishes, only stipulating that Madame Berthe herself should accompany Blanche instead of Rosalie. The poor old woman prepared with many deep groans: she had taken but one journey within her life, the memorable one that brought her to St Didier, and she felt low and unhappy at the prospect of starting afresh. However, her devotion to her son's cause would have carried her through the mysteries of Isis even, so she made her preparations with praiseworthy courage.

"Tell me, Camille," said Blanche, just on the eve of starting—"tell me the sort of tenants you want."

"Look!" said Monsieur Legros, pointing through the window from one house to another. "In that blue house I want a *père de famille*; he may have from four to eight children, who require education. In the pink house, *les Rosiers*, I want a lady and two daughters. That house with the arcade is a *châlet de garçon*; the smoking-room is perfect. I want educating families especially. There," he said, exultantly, "that villa is just the one for a young *ménage*."

"I see," said Blanche, eagerly. "But I hope for most success among the large families."

"And those are the best of all," answered her husband. "But of all others a Scotch family is the best; for I hear that when they settle, many of their friends, uncles, cousins, and other relations come and settle round them."

Blanche and Madame Berthe went away with their minds full of large Scotch families.

CHAPTER IV.

Madame Berthe and Blanche arrived at Nantes, their first destination, on the 28th of May, the evening before the *Fête Dieu*. They had taken a room in one of the best hotels, and found to their great delight that it was full of foreigners, all crowded there to see the famous *fête*.

Table d'hôte was at six o'clock. Now that the moment had come, Blanche was very much frightened, and clung to Madame Berthe's arm, who, very tremulous herself, managed to say sharp cross things in an under-tone, as they went in. Blanche found herself seated by a young girl, almost as shy as herself, and unmistakably English. In spite of many sharp little pinches from her mother-in-law, she could not make up her mind to begin the conversation until the soup was done; then she asked the young lady very timidly whether she liked France. The answer, in very broken French, was bright and cheery; and the blue eyes of the English girl, Meta Brownlow, looked so sweet and sunshiny, that they soon became quite friendly, discussing different places, and making comparisons. Blanche found that her new acquaintance was anxious to understand all about the *fête* on the morrow, so as to enjoy it thoroughly; and it ended in an engagement to meet the English family at the cathedral at high mass the following morning.

The *Fête Dieu* at Nantes is supposed to be the most beautiful in France. The English travellers were full of admiration as they emerged into the *Place* in front of the cathedral just in time to see the great procession leave the east door. The whole thing formed one of those brilliant pictures which remain in the memory for years; the

streets and houses all draped with white, scarlet, and blue, the draperies covered with hanging wreaths; triumphal arches overhead, from which hung baskets of lovely flowers; the whole streets strewn thickly with rushes: then the gorgeous procession itself filing solemnly out from the dark back-ground of the dim old church; hundreds of little white and scarlet boys with stiff quaint rose-wreaths on their heads; girls in white, with long white floating veils; the gleaming of military pomp, and a fine clash of martial music as the regiment slowly passed; then women in white again, and a long line of monks with bare feet and heads, and brown rough habits; then the acolytes in gorgeous dalmatics of cloth-of-gold, carrying banners, crosses, shrines—gold, crimson, purple—the brilliant colouring growing more vivid,—till suddenly the bells all rolled out with a crashing sound. Like one man, every one in the vast crowd sank on their knees; twenty choir-boys in scarlet and white stood facing the great door, swinging incense in silver censers, their long chains flashing in the sun; then the chanting began, and out into the light came swaying the huge gold and silver canopy, and the Host, carried by the bishop, passed slowly amidst the prostrate crowd.

Blanche rose from her knees. "It was beautiful, was it not?" she cried, eagerly. She was almost breathless with the admiration and excitement she felt. The blue cloudless sky, the masses of roses, honeysuckle, and white pinks, the great red peonies, all added brilliance and sweet fragrance to the scene, and the thin blue clouds of incense dispersed very slowly in the clear air.

Blanche had won her way completely with the English family, who were delighted with all they saw and heard; but not till evening did she venture to broach the subject that lay so near her heart. Then when again seated at *table d'hôte* she began to talk about St Didier. She heard, with a throb of her heart that was almost painful, that the Brownlows were thinking of spending the summer months at Dieppe. "If you would only try St Didier," she said, wistfully. "It would be something quite new for you; and there is such a good professor there, if you want music and singing."

Mr and Mrs Brownlow talked it over that evening. They had been at Dieppe two years running, and were quite prepared to like the prospect of a change. They talked it over also with an old Scotch lady, a Miss Macdonald, who was present with a very delicate niece. They were all sociable people, and they made a plan to go together to St Didier at the end of the week, to see whether they liked it.

Blanche threw herself into Madame Berthe's arms that night, and said, "I knew it would be so! I knew it. I prayed so hard at the 'Grande Messe' this morning."

"Do not hope too much," said the old woman in her grumbling voice; "remember how many people came and looked at St Didier and went away again."

"Ah! but they will not this time," said Blanche, hopefully; "I have prayed too much."

There was something in the sweet bright faith that shone in Blanche's lovely eyes that checked Madame Berthe, and she did not give vent to the peevish doubt which arose in her mind.

The next morning they left Nantes and went on to Tours; Blanche determining to return to St Didier in time to prepare for

the appearance of her new acquaintances. There were many English at Tours, and Blanche managed to talk of St Didier to two people: one an old gentleman who was not at all likely to want sea-bathing; the other a French lady, who drank in her description of the place eagerly, and questioned her methodically as to prices, advantages, and terms of leases, ending by promising to come and see the place during the course of the month.

The old gentleman, Dr Price, shook his head, and laughed a little over Blanche's description of the good bathing. She had repeated her little story till she almost knew it by heart, making no secret of her own deep interest in the success of the place. She told every one that it was all new, quite new; that, in fact, that was one of its advantages. After that Blanche and Madame Berthe returned home.

Monsieur Legros heard all that they had to tell with great interest; he gave Blanche *carte blanche* to promise all they asked for, to the expected visitors, if only they would come and take the houses.

On one fine Thursday evening they arrived, Mr and Mrs Brownlow and Miss Macdonald; they had left all the young people behind, being very doubtful as to St Didier.

"It is probably a wild-geese chase," said Mr Brownlow, as they drove up to the hotel. "But that little woman was quite irresistible."

"How wonderfully sweet and fresh the air is!" answered his wife. "I long to get down on to those beautiful sands."

The next morning was beautiful, the sky cloudlessly blue, the sea almost purple, bounded by the band of snow-white foam which outlined the grand rocks; the pink, and blue, and green houses looked gay and sunshiny; and Blanche, looking very dainty and pretty, did the honours of the houses one after

another. They looked at so many that her large eyes began to look wistful and startled. Was it to be a failure after all?

That day passed and the night came. Nothing was said. The difficulty was Miss Macdonald, who could not make up her mind as to the exposed situation of the place being good for her invalid niece.

The omnibus that evening brought a new visitor to the hotel, Dr Price himself. He merely ordered his portmanteau to be taken in, and immediately walked off down to the sands. The whole party met at *table d'hôte*, and Miss Macdonald was seated next to the Doctor.

In answer to her hesitating question of what he thought of the place, his answer was enthusiastic.

"Why, ma'am, it fulfils every sanatory condition! The right aspect,—everything! I do not see what any one could wish for more."

After another long consultation two notes were despatched directed to Monsieur Legros by Mr Brownlow and Miss Macdonald.

Blanche watched her husband as he read them, and read the answer in his face.

"We have begun at last," he said, and for a moment covered his face with his hands.

"It is all right?" she whispered, for her voice seemed to go.

"It is all right; they wish to take the blue house, and the English Miss Macdonald 'les Rosiers.'"

The next morning Dr Price called on Monsieur Legros and engaged the little house with the arcades, not for the summer, but for a year. He then asked for the refusal of two or three other houses pending letters from England.

"I have long been looking for just such a place as this for my patients," he said, pompously.

In a few weeks St Didier was all alive. The Scotch tradition proved true: a large family of

brothers and sisters followed Miss Macdonald; they brought friends of their own; the place began to be talked about. Dr Price proved to be the most important fish that the net of Blanche's charms had landed. He was a physician of considerable eminence, who, having made his fortune, had retired into private life, reserving to himself only a certain number of favourite patients. He seized upon St Didier and at once made it into his hobby. He recommended it, he superintended the drainage, he caused baths—douches, hot salt baths, and other invalid luxuries—to be established; he established himself there; and before another year was over, Monsieur Legros had not a single house or apartment unlet on his hands.

Then, and not till then, did Monsieur and Madame Benoit come to St Didier, accompanied by Jean—Jean, who had outgrown his first love, and who had now a moustache. He was prepared to ignore the sentiment which had made him persevere in his speculation in St Didier, and was proud of boasting that he had had the foresight to see what would really come of it.

Madame Berthe continued to be very cross, but never with Blanche now.

"Of all my Camille's speculations, thou hast turned out the best," she said once to her daughter-in-law; and there was little doubt that Legros thought so also.

They stood together one day looking down on the little crowd assembled listening to a band, all gay, bright, and *riant*, and Blanche pressed her husband's hand.

"It is a great success, *mon ami*, is it not?" she said. "And for success one must thank God."

"I will; I do," he answered, earnestly.

Legros was a kinder and a better man for the success of his Great Speculation.

SHORT SERVICE AND ITS SUPPORTERS.

EVERY one who takes an intelligent interest in army matters must be aware that Sir Garnet Wolseley favours the short-service system, and that he has identified himself, more or less, with reforms from the outside, of which Mr Childers and Lord Cardwell are and have been exponents. Of course a profession, the very essence of which is obedience, would be false to itself if it actively originated and pushed on reforms; and therefore it is more or less a necessity that such reforms as time and exterior change render expedient, should come from without. Nevertheless, it may be accepted as an axiom, that any change—call it reform or any other less polite name—carried out in opposition to the all but unanimous feeling of the profession, entails upon its originators and promoters a very heavy responsibility.

Now the system of short *versus* long service is a question on which the army is thoroughly of one mind. It disbelieves in the young soldier. It is fresh within our memories that Sir Frederick Roberts, in a speech which was re-echoed from end to end of the empire, denounced with no faltering tongue the short-service system, as being calculated to land us in disaster all but irretrievable. It is remarkable not only that this memorable speech was pronounced in the presence of H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge (who is responsible, as far as in our political system a military man can be responsible, for the effectiveness of the army), but that it seemed to have been led up to by a passage in the previous speech of his Royal Highness, which might be said almost to

have invited Sir Frederick Roberts's strictures.

The next pronouncement is the article of Sir Garnet Wolseley in the March number of a contemporary periodical.* It has been said some lines back that in the army reform must come from without. Nevertheless, views of the necessity of reform, or of the direction which reform, being necessary, should follow, may be taken from a stand-point within the profession or from one without. A civilian who desires to reform the army may, and indeed ought to, make himself so familiar with the ways and thought of the profession as to be able to view the question from within, and from that stand-point gradually to lead the profession to acquiesce in, and even to desire, the intended reforms. But as a matter of fact, our statesmen have not the time, cannot snatch from the exigencies of party the opportunity, to do this. They look at the question from without, and simply and solely from the parliamentary point of view. Now the parliamentary view is first of all Economy; 2dly, Economy; 3dly, Economy, and then Efficiency.

Of the two distinguished men whose utterances have mainly occasioned this article, Sir Frederick looks at the point from within, Sir Garnet views it from without, the profession; and it must be said that if the army hangs on the words of Sir Frederick with delight, as it certainly has done, the words of Sir Garnet are nevertheless more likely to prevail.

A soldier urging a reform which is distasteful to the profession ought to write with the greatest calm, with

* Nineteenth Century.

the most earnest desire to use no word calculated to give offence, and with a total absence of haste. Now it is impossible to read Sir G. Wolseley's article without coming to the conclusion that these canons of good taste have been disregarded. It might be necessary to do away with the effect of Sir Frederick Roberts's telling speech; it might be necessary to strengthen the hands of a Minister who had to propose or to maintain changes distasteful to the profession,—and so some haste might, under the circumstances, be excusable; but what is most striking in the article is its total want of generosity. It is hardly too much to say that Sir Garnet in that article treats the profession to which he has the honour of belonging with very considerable scorn. "Our military rulers"—"our very oldest officers"—"a certain class of officers"—"the regimental officers"—"the army" at large,—all have their share in depreciatory remarks, which hardly fall short of being vituperative.

The army largely sympathises with the recent observations of Sir Frederick Roberts: it became necessary to show how incompetent the army is to judge of the question.

"Ignorance as to the meaning and effect of short service is very largely shared in by the army, many of whose older members condemn it without understanding the reasons that begot it, or the objects it was intended to secure." "There is a certain class of officers who . . . are unconscious of the fact that discoveries and inventions react upon armies and military science." "If our military rulers allow it to get abroad . . . that any recently effected change is, in their opinion, contrary to our traditions, . . . our older officers take up the cry, and its echo comes back to us from

the morning-room of every military club." The character of these remarks makes itself more felt by leaving them uncommented on; but this allusion to "our military rulers" necessitates some comment. Sir Garnet claims that the Duke of Cambridge is on his side in this matter of short enlistment. On the other hand, his Royal Highness's seeming acquiescence whilst listening to Sir Frederick Roberts's speech disposes us to doubt whether such sympathy ever existed; or whether, if it did exist, it has not had to yield to the teachings of a longer experience.

Who, then, these "military rulers" are who are waking the echoes is very uncertain, and the phrase reads like one of those haphazard charges which irresponsible persons from time to time throw into the air.

But there are some few more quotations which it is well to collect together. Thus, Sir Garnet says of "a large proportion of our very oldest officers," that "their aspirations do not soar beyond the creation of well-set-up, perfectly drilled soldiers: . . . they do not believe in a reserve they cannot see; and they believe only in the men whom they can daily inspect at Hyde Park or at Aldershot."

Having thus accounted for the dislike to short service of the seniors, the dislike of the juniors is held to arise from the fact that "it adds very considerably to the daily work of regimental officers;" a fact which, Sir Garnet says, "must not be forgotten." He goes on to point out that "the mode of life of the regimental officer will have to be very different from what it used to be; many hours of idleness, the long period of leave, must be abandoned. . . . Hitherto our army has been a pleasant home for idle men: . . . all this

must be entirely changed by the system of short service."

Beyond a doubt, when this very regrettable article was written, Sir Garnet was in a hurry—almost in as great haste as when he sent home the troops from the Cape. Long *versus* short service is a question which can be discussed on its merits without heat, and without disparaging almost all the members of a noble profession. What the country desires is to have, on the voluntary system, a sufficient army which shall not be inordinately costly.

We have had many failures in keeping our regiments full, greater failures in reinforcing them. Sir Garnet insists that the long-service system failed; and he endeavours to parry the objection so often raised at present—that we have to deplete regiments at home in order to fill up regiments abroad and on sudden emergencies—by saying that "this system of completing the members of a regiment going abroad, by obtaining volunteers from other corps, is a very old one." It is an old one, and bitterly was that system inveighed against by regimental officers in pre-Crimean days; but it is difficult to see how this argument helps Sir Garnet Wolseley. At any rate, the soldiers so transferred were men. Usually indeed, and for the most part, they were men who carried with them a very varied record of crimes and punishments, and their *morale* left something to be desired, but their *physique* was splendid. If the reminder was brought in as an argument to show that the *voluntary* system was a failure, it would have weight; but it is useless as a defence of the short-service system.

It is idle to suppose that the voluntary system will stand real pressure: it never has done, and

it never will. The article we are criticising, indeed, brings this out, for Sir Garnet says: "At the end of the last and the early part of this century, criminals, paupers, debtors, and vagrants were forced in large numbers to serve in our ranks;" and if from this feature of *voluntary enlistment* our army was, in the opinion of the Duke of Wellington, "worse than an enemy" in unfortunate Spain, at any rate the same undeniable authority was able to say, "We are an excellent army to fight." Now our contention and that of Sir F. Roberts is, that our army is *not* an excellent one to fight. It is brave, it is well conducted, but it has not the stamina and marching power which enable it to be placed in positions to show its bravery.

Sir Garnet puts the real difficulty fairly when he says, "The question of age is not one of sentiment, it is one of money;" but when he says, "Through short service, and by means of it alone, can we ever hope to create such an army reserve as will enable us to complete our regiments to war strength . . . without having recourse to the old system of volunteering," he begs the question. Let the reader carefully weigh that sentence of Sir Garnet's. The object of the short service is to create a reserve; and on the first note of war, that reserve is to disappear to "complete our regiments to war strength."

Sir Garnet Wolseley's idea of a reserve, and the Continental one, differ very much. I may say, it differs from the professional one: a reserve is required to fill up gaps created by war, not to create a first line. We have, as a nation, been very much struck with the military success of the Prussians, and have come to admire, and rather blindly so, various portions of their military organisation.

That organisation is built upon three principles—

1. Compulsory service.
2. Short service.
3. A strong and efficient reserve.

Of these three we adopt the second, as if it was a good in itself, which it most certainly is not.

It is difficult to get a non-professional man to understand the enormous difference that there is between a soldier of two or three years' service, and one of ten, twelve, fourteen years' service. It is not so much that the *physique* of the latter is so superior, so much more capable of withstanding fatigue and hardship; there has been instilled into him a new nature, and one of slow growth. The natural instinct of a man is to take care of himself: a man of capacity will seek safety independently of others,—the ordinary run of men seek it by herding together like sheep. It takes longer than most persons would suppose to eradicate that instinct,—to replace it by the instinct of obedience—that instinct which makes a man rely on the officer set over him, irrespective of any merits which may or may not reside in the officer in question. It is that instinct, and that alone, which makes the difference between the trained and the untrained soldier; it is that instinct which puts into the hands of a capable commander a force all but invincible, and secures to the man of moderate capacity a chance of safety, for himself and those under him, which no other quality could give. Training is not the knowledge of drill: it is the *habit* of obedience,—the supplanting of a natural by an artificial instinct. It is almost impossible to get a non-military man to appreciate this; nor will a soldier realise it to its full extent till he has been under fire.

But to return to the Continental

system. In that system short service is simply a necessary evil: it is one of the necessary complements of compulsory service and of a large standing army. If the service were not short, the compulsory nature of the service would gradually become nominal, to be avoided by bribery or favour; it would become that most intolerable of all evils—the servitude of a class. To avoid this, a large number of persons must pass through the ranks; hence service must be short, to keep the numbers within limits. A large and easily constituted reserve is therefore one other of the complements of compulsory service. Until we adopt compulsory service, then, short service is a thing to be avoided—if by any other means, to use Sir Garnet Wolseley's words, "we can remove the unpopularity of the army with the classes from which we must look for recruits."

As to the mode of solving this difficulty, we will say a few more words further on. At present we desire to speak touching reserves. The Continental idea of a reserve and that of Sir Garnet Wolseley is, as we have shown, entirely different. The construction of a Continental reserve, and the construction of one for our purposes, must be proceeded with on essentially different principles. The Continental armies, with or without reserves, are in a state of readiness to take the field and commence any ordinary war. On Sir Garnet Wolseley's own showing, ours is not ready; for he has pointed out the immediate use to which our reserves would be put.

Now there is another difference, more important still, which, strange to say, does not meet the attention it merits. The Continental armies are very large, and are deemed sufficient by their masters for the purpose for which they are created,—which is to protect the mother

country, and to enable that country to speak with authority and effect in the councils of the world. Ours has to do all this, and a very great deal more. It has to protect a colonial empire vast enough, if put together, to swallow up the whole of Europe; and in addition to this, to engage, all over the world, in wars of a peculiarly harassing nature. Omitting the peculiarity of our insular position, and the power which our navy gives us, if any one was asked, as an abstract problem, to say what proportion the army of this country should bear to the armies of France or Prussia, bearing in mind the duties it has to fill, he would undoubtedly say it should be thrice as numerous as that of either France or Prussia. It is, as we know, very much smaller than either. That being so, not only should each component part be as perfect as is possible,—its ranks being filled by men, not by boys,—but the reserve, unlike that of other nations, should be very much more numerous than the army itself.

To try and get an adequate reserve from an inadequate army, is an impossibility which it is most desirable should be thoroughly recognised as early as may be. Our nominal reserve is in reality our first line. We have no reserve, and can have none, on the voluntary principle, except the militia. If we are ever exposed to real pressure, the militia would have to be raised by ballot; and it might be impossible to confine the necessity for compulsory service even within that limit.

Let us now return to the plan proposed for filling our ranks. The long-service system has, we are told, broken down, the tedium of the long service not being compensated for sufficiently by the inducements offered. The inducements to en-

gage in civil life have been increased. Employers have to pay more for labour than they used; and we don't want to pay more for our army than we used to do. In other words, we desire to get our volunteer soldier at less than the market-price. As we will not pay what, from competition, is really the market-price of the article, we have attempted to get over the difficulty by reducing the sacrifices which a country yokel who joins the army will have to make. It is a less sacrifice to bind one's self to service for six years than for twenty-one; and so it has been thought that by reducing the period of the servitude we should get more recruits. So far as the recruits go, undoubtedly that is so; but as to getting more *soldiers*, meaning men capable of doing a soldier's work, if we are to believe Sir Frederick Roberts, our schemes have ended in failure.

Sir Garnet Wolseley recalls in his article how (to use the words of the then Mr Sidney Herbert, Nov. 1854) "the army of the East has been recruited by discounting the future. Every regiment at home and within reach, and not forming part of the army, has been robbed to complete it,"—even the "depots of battalions under Lord Raglan have been similarly treated." Thus our whole available force was then in the first line, and our military strength was exhausted by putting into the field, and failing to maintain there, an army which at the battle of the Alma numbered 26,000 men. Four months later two-thirds of that army had disappeared. The drafts sent out were useless. Lord Raglan begged that no more should be forwarded, as they "were so young and unformed, that they were swept away like flies."

What is Sir Garnet Wolseley's

description of our present military condition? "The battalions on home service are, with the exception of those first for foreign service, little more than great depots, or military schools, for the manufacture of drilled soldiers." That is to say, that except the regiments preparing to relieve our depleted battalions in the colonies, the rest are *flies*.

What failed us in the Crimea was not the "long service," but the "voluntary" system. Drafts went out and died. The honour of the flag was defended at that time by the life service (*i.e.*, 21 years' men), and by them alone. If we had had the short-service system then, we must have sent out the militia, or marched home what was left of us, leaving French and Turks (the Sardinians came later) to protect our inglorious retreat. We are rapidly approaching the time when the whole army will consist of *flies*, with a reserve nine years off, then to reach the magnificent total of 44,000 men, and be capable, according to Sir Garnet, of filling up our regiments to war strength.

At present, if, to use Mr Childers's own words, "we engaged in a European war, or for the preservation of our Indian empire, we should of course at once call out the army reserve of—25,000 men"! The reserve will have become the first line—the gaps to be filled by the *flies*.

But the feeling of the whole profession is set at naught in even, if possible, a more vital point than in the question of the duration of service. The point on which, more than any other, the army prides itself, is in the excellence of our regimental system. The regimental system may be said to be a thing of tradition. To the non-military man, a regiment is an agglomeration of men, which, for convenience' sake, is designated by a certain

number. It was found out one day that the component parts of our rifles could be made with such precision and nicety as to be interchangeable. The resulting convenience was duly appreciated, and from that discovery perhaps originated the idea that men could be interchangeable too.

Sir Frederick Roberts has well pointed out, that so long as we have the voluntary system, the carrying into effect of this principle of the interchangeability of men is an invasion of the rights of the individual soldier. But these rights conflict with the constitution and arrangement of a force upon paper, which upon paper can be more satisfactorily arranged, manipulated, and distributed by ignoring the sentiment which clings to the magic number of a regiment; and this sentiment has been subjected to, and is threatened further with, a process of obliteration. Our regimental system, depending to a great extent upon tradition, has been, and will be till it is destroyed, the admiration of Continental armies. It is that system which makes the illiterate soldier lose his own identity in that of the hallowed name or number, and makes men stand back to back, when the alternative has been between death and dishonour to the corps. You cannot tell how men are governed: the springs of that power which enables the few to rule the many are occult. You cannot reason about them; it is enough to know that they exist. To an attentive looker-on at a review or drill of troops, it is a marvel how some officers will throw their will into the mechanical muscular movements of the men they are directing; whilst others will cause them to move with an uncertainty and a want of cohesion which possibly none but a practised eye can detect, but which

to such a glance is very apparent indeed.

By what invisible power some men can transfuse into the motions, ay, and into the souls of other men, calm, confidence, quickness, accuracy, who can say? Reformers on paper cannot understand this, possibly do not believe it; but the power exists, and its source lies very much, though not wholly, in that absorption of the individual into the regiment which springs from the regimental system. If Sir Garnet Wolseley's regimental career had not been so short as it was, he would have understood this better than he does.

The writer of these pages had the privilege of becoming acquainted with an old Connaught woman, who, standing across the stricken form of her husband, a private in the 57th Regiment, had used his musket at Waterloo and fought like the best of them, till she was herself disabled by a gunshot-wound. When he made her acquaintance she was a widow, old, barefooted, dependent upon charity, for her pensioned husband had lately died. To that old woman the number of her regiment was more than the memory of all else besides—more than thought of husband, more than child, more than her kith and kin, all of whom she had survived. When she spoke of her old corps, and declared that the 57th was, in her parlance, "the best ridgment that ever drew foot," the old dame's withered face lit up as if it had caught the rays of the setting sun. A military man reared in the regimental system can understand this, a civilian cannot; and so the linked interchangeable-battalion system, which is odious to the service, is to be made worse. The glorious traditions will become of the past. The prized number, the direct legitimate descent of

many regiments, will be taken from them, and a bastard territorial corps, in which no one has any pride, in which the militia is to be made as it were one with the line, will be set up instead. The names, the numbers, the memories which have been bought by blood, will be no more. It was not thus that the great Napoleon moved the hearts of men, and dictated their pulsations by the beat of his own. It is through sentiment that the world is ruled.

So far as Mr Childers explains the matter, the great object to be gained is a small saving of expense, which will result by refreshing the colonial force less often by relief of regiments, sending out more drafts. If the seventy battalions abroad are to be halved in numbers and doubled in size, and if it is intended to relieve them every sixteen years, it will be seen that the saving will be of the most infinitesimal character. We now annually bring home six single battalions. Under the new scheme we shall bring home two double, equal to four single ones. The reform is worthy of a clerk; no military man could possibly have conceived it. The disadvantage of the system from a military point of view, as being a further blow to the regimental system, can hardly have made itself understood by, probably has never even occurred to, Mr Childers.

There will result two inconveniences which have always been held by military men as prejudicial to effectiveness. One is the remaining too long abroad, unsubjected as a regiment to the minute supervision and the rivalry with other regiments which occur at home. The second is the being broken up into detachments. Both these inconveniences causing deterioration occur now, and always have oc-

curred ; both will be much aggravated by the new system.

We have now a few words to say with regard to the arrangements contemplated for officers. The purchase system had at least two good effects. One was, that it created a current of promotion fairly sufficient. The second was, that it required and necessitated the retirement of no officer who was not content to go. The new system has dammed up the current, and it necessitates the retirement of a great many who would sooner stay than go.

That the Queen's service is better done under the new system admits of a doubt. The average of discontent in the army has been largely increased. There is this to be said, however, that the retention of the purchase system was a question on which the army was by no means unanimous ; and those who destroyed it did not incur the same responsibility as did Lord Cardwell, and as does Mr Childers, in cramming down the throats of a profession alterations which it positively abhors.

It is hard to see how a saving is to be effected, or a block mitigated, by reducing the number of subalterns and of captains, and adding to the number of majors and second lieutenant-colonels.

What an officer worth his salt desires is to "command men," and that under fire. The world probably can give a man no greater feeling of exulting pleasure than that of commanding men in a successful action. Such a man does not want to be called major, colonel, or general. He aims beyond that. A captain's way to that goal is blocked no more and no less by a major over him than by a captain over him. It is of course a boon to a man to wait for his chance on a major's pay rather than on a cap-

tain's ; but there the boon ceases, and the most marked result is a slight increase in the estimates. The service is no better for the change. It is, indeed, a good deal the worse. The creation of second lieutenant-colonels is a decided mistake. Where a regiment has had two lieutenant-colonels, the usual result, unless where one at least is a very superior man, is a clique in the regiment. The junior almost invariably lets it get about how much better he could do the business than the man actually in command ; while the senior is content with considering his junior a nuisance. With regard to the majors, it appears that it is intended to reduce the number of captains and increase the number of majors. The majors will then become the "Horse Marines" of the corps, and the rank will lose something in the way of respect. Under present and past circumstances, one of the difficulties of the commanding officer has been what to do with his majors. One was bad enough, but when two were present things became more complicated. It does not follow that the rank and office of major were useless. So far as the direct working of the regiment was concerned, either in or out of the orderly-room, the officer commanding, if his captains were what they should be, derived no particular advantage from the presence of his majors. In most regiments they are and were like the fifth wheel of a coach. Nevertheless, the rank was and is useful in two ways. If any little breach of discipline or good manners occurred among officers, the majors could, and usually did, settle the matter without bringing it to the notice of the officer commanding ; and thus the general business of the regiment went on more pleasantly and harmoniously—and dis-

cipline was, if anything, better carried on than if the matter had to come before one from whose decision, except in very exceptional circumstances, there was practically no appeal. Again, the office of major was, for all concerned, a useful break between the intimacy which existed between the captains and the autocracy in command. He was also a useful, and perhaps necessary, *locum tenens* in the absence of the colonel.

The main difficulty, however, in the organisation of the army, is the getting in of recruits of a satisfactory description at a moderate cost.

It is not getting soldiers at a moderate cost, to recruit boys, who cannot be sent to the colours at once. To get *men* to serve, the country must either put its hand in its pocket or popularise the service. To connect each regiment with some particular locality is theoretically a move in this direction, and it is one which can be worked without violating any of the traditions of the service. But to obtain a working army that can be depended on, certain principles must be laid down and acted on:—

1. That our real reserve is the militia, with the volunteers as a good back, or an immediate active aid, according to the temper of the times and the popularity of the war.

2. That in case of war with a Continental Power, the militia is to be raised by ballot; and an enactment to that end should be prepared.

3. That the regimental system should be fostered.

4. That we must get back as quickly as possible to the twenty-one years' system—that is, to the pension system.

The territorial system could be worked thus:—

It would be necessary, first of

all, to estimate how many battalions we consider requisite to have ready and effective for colonial service and India, for the reliefs, and for home service. All these battalions should be maintained in a state of perfect efficiency, having no soldier in them of less than three years' service, or more than fifteen in times of peace at home. The number of regiments should be limited to the number of battalions so required; but each regiment should have a reserve or second battalion. Thus, some regiments would disappear wholly from the Army List; but the traditions of those left would remain unimpaired. The reserve battalion should always be quartered in the same place, —liable, of course, to removal, but removed only for temporary emergencies, or in case local disaffection should exist. The service should be for twelve years, with an absolute right to re-engage for nine years more, obtaining a pension at the end, unless such right was forfeited by sentence of court-martial for certain specified offences, or was lost from medical disability.

By such a system, we should have our nursery of soldiers, and a reserve to meet the very first immediate wants; we should have a certain number of regiments fit to take the field as they stand, at a moment's notice; and each regiment would become identified with a certain district, thus popularising the corps. The recruit would remain for three years with the reserve battalion, during which time he would be within reach of those who knew him from his birth. He would spend the next seven years with the active-service battalion (which might be at home or abroad), and would return to the old place to finish the two remaining years of his engagement.

Many, probably most of the

time-expired men, would re-engage; and they, together with the men completing their engagement, would help to train the recruits, indoctrinating them with the traditions of the corps, and would themselves be ready for any sudden emergency at home or abroad.

After the second year of such re-engaged service, the men might be allowed to resume the dress and habits of civil life, putting in an appearance for drill purposes for a certain number of days,* drawing a reduced pay, but their claim to pension still going on. The arrangement for non-commissioned officers would be a detail easily worked out.

By such a scheme, a whole district would soon get to take an interest in a particular corps; and it would be found that the service had become popular, that recruiting had become easy, desertions less numerous; and we should have a small but compact army, always ready, and raised at as moderate a cost as is compatible with the voluntary system.

Since these few pages were written, there has been an interesting discussion, scarcely rising to the dignity of a debate, in the House of Lords, on the proposed military reforms, which pertinently bears upon the points we have been treating of.

Lord Chelmsford drew attention to the undue youthfulness of our men, and pointed out that in the German army the ages of the men are from twenty-one to twenty-seven. In our army, on the other hand, they might be even under nineteen, whenever a "physical equivalent" (the meaning of which the noble lord showed to be vague)

permitted. And Lord Chelmsford recommends, as we do, double battalions, and in almost identical language. He called attention, as we did, to Sir Garnet Wolseley's short experience as a regimental officer, and expresses similar disapproval of the article we have been examining. The speech of H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge was necessarily the most important one in the discussion. On army questions it must and often does happen that his silence is as instructive as his speech, weighty and well considered as his words on these subjects always are. In studying his speeches, we must read between the lines. With soldier-like frankness he tells us so himself: "In my position, it would not be proper even to have the appearance of antagonism to the views of the Government of the day." Every observation of his must be understood, subject to this condition. It is of importance, then, that the only good word that he is disposed to give the new scheme is: "I think the Secretary of State for War has done all that he could under the circumstances in which he found himself."

What these circumstances were his Royal Highness explains: "No political party is disposed to incur the risks and difficulties which a demand for large sums of money may entail." Of the short-service system, the Duke says: "A larger establishment of men than we have hitherto maintained will always be required;" and he significantly adds, "that is one of the questions which the other House of Parliament will have to deal with." What was the nature of the parliamentary view, we have pointed out in our first page. We claimed that

* Men exceptionally valuable could be permitted to serve actively with either battalion at increased pay, as a reward for good and useful service.

his Royal Highness was really with us in the matter of long and short service; and the more narrowly his speech on the 5th April is examined, the stronger does our claim appear to be. He expresses pleasure only on hearing that the duration of service is to be increased; and he delivers himself of the following criticisms: "A short-service system necessitates the maintenance of a larger establishment than that required under the older system. . . . Unless you have a large number of men at your command, it will become difficult to feed battalions serving abroad. That is a point not quite understood by the Government." Nowhere does he give to the short service anything but the most negative praise, as thus: "I very much doubt whether it would have been possible to continue the system of long service, owing to the difficulties of recruiting." What those difficulties are, was pointed out when we said, that it is desired to get the volunteer soldiers at less than the market price. His Royal Highness says practically the same thing, and he has said it over and over again. "The questions to be solved are, to a large extent, questions of pounds, shillings, and pence." He accepted the linked battalion system, he expressly tells us, as a *pis aller*. The suggestion that appears at the close of our article, that it would be found necessary to give the Government power to raise the militia by ballot, was the one which we made with the most diffidence. There are suggestions which one hesitates naturally to make, unless the public mind is partially at least prepared to accept them. It was, then, with much pleasure we found that the Duke of Cambridge and Viscount Bury were leaving us be-

hind. His Royal Highness said—and his words are remarkable as expressing a continuity of view,—“I have always been strongly of opinion that you ought to have conscription for the militia. The militia ought to be kept up to its full strength. I do not care what you call it, conscription or ballot, it comes to much the same thing. It ought always to be in a condition to fill up the gaps in the regular army.” His Royal Highness looks upon the militia as we do,—as being our real reserve.

The remarks of Viscount Hardinge were most useful, showing as he did that the present system had failed to feed or popularise the service. According to him, “within the past six years . . . 17,000 men had been lost through desertion, and 15,000 through invaliding, discharge, &c. . . . Not one of these men had gone into the reserve.” The Earl of Galloway pointed out that, “within twelve months of enlistment the ratio of desertions increased to something like twenty-five per cent;” and he attributes this “disgrace to the country” largely to the linked battalion system. Lord Bury showed, as we have tried to show, that compulsory service was the backbone of the Continental army systems, and that in copying from them we had lost sight entirely of the spirit which vivified them, and of the different objects they sought to attain. He gave striking instances of the failure of the linked system; and the multifarious duties of our army were brought strikingly before the country when he pointed out that, “during the last forty years we had been at war for thirty-five years, . . . and during two years of that time had no less than four wars on hand at the same time.”

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY.—PART VII.

CHAPTER XXI.

"I CAN'T think what has come to Robert," said Mrs Scallan to her daughter, on receiving the previous Saturday evening his note of excuse for absenting himself from her dinner. "A week or two ago and he was going in and out of the house like a tame dog, and I really began to think that he would pluck up courage to make his declaration, and now he never comes near us; what can it be?" and she looked at her daughter as if seeking in her face for some clue to the change in her cousin's behaviour.

But Miss Blanche made no reply. She was piqued at his indifference, the reason for which she was quite at a loss to understand. It could not arise from the conflicting claims of any other tie, for that tie was in existence, as she supposed, at the time of her first arrival, when, as her mother truly observed, Clifford seemed to be at her feet. We cannot appreciate feelings which we have never ourselves experienced. The impudent serving-wenches at railway refreshment-stalls, who insult the travelling public with their insolent manners, are evidently on the best terms with themselves, and deemed to be quite fascinating by the young Lovelaces from the hospitals and the attorneys' offices who hang about their counters, exchanging elegant *badinage* with the women, while the latter are supposed to be attending to their customers. Both parties are in happy unconsciousness of the disgust their clumsy horseplay excites among the lookers-on. ; So too, Blanche, although sensible of Clifford's change of feeling, did not understand what was the cause of it. She did not per-

ceive that her fast ways and coarse feelings were gradually overcoming in her cousin the effect of the fascination created by her beauty. But the change so palpable in Clifford had made an alteration also in her own feeling towards him. So long as he stood in awe of her, in thralldom to her beauty, that feeling was close akin to contempt; while the fact that she was destined to have him for a husband made her the more averse to treating him with favour. Without working out the matter at all distinctly in her mind—for Miss Blanche had not been trained to mental analysis—she was conscious in an indefinite sort of way that the more cheaply she held her future husband before marriage, the more easy it would be to maintain her ascendancy afterwards. Blanche knew enough of her cousin to know that, shy although he might be now, he would not be a cipher in his own house. Still we always value most what we find hardest to get; and the feeling of gratitude Clifford would experience for being accepted, as it were under protest, might be trusted to last over the time of possession. In short, it fitted in with her scornful disposition not to make herself too cheap. But now that Clifford no longer showed himself obedient to her beck and call, but had begun to appear almost as indifferent as herself about establishing a definite engagement, his behaviour assumed much more importance in her eyes. There was another reason also which made it important to bring her cousin to her feet; there had been gradually opening up to her the possibility

of escaping altogether from the marriage. She was conscious that Burrard, for all his careless ways, found her very attractive; she was beginning to fancy herself in love with him. Had Burrard practised his off-hand manner on purpose, he could not have followed a plan better adapted to win so much of a heart as the girl possessed. His hardly disguised contempt for her social position, and his good-natured forbearing acquiescence in her pretensions, had thoroughly fascinated her. Blanche felt that he was her master, and admired him accordingly. And although she knew that her mother, and still more her father, would resent any attempt on Burrard's part to come between her cousin and herself, and was careful not to awaken any suspicion in her mother's mind, she by no means acquiesced in the view that a marriage with Robert would be the more advantageous of the two. Burrard was a younger son, with small means; but his elder brother, although married, had no children, and was in delicate health. Burrard might any day become heir to the earldom; and although he was not the sort of man lightly to make a foolish marriage—and Blanche was clear-sighted enough to feel that a marriage with her would deserve to be so styled,—still the favourable reception of another suitor would be more than anything likely to bring him to the point. Jealousy might be effective in his case. For all these reasons it did not at all suit her plans that Clifford should keep aloof; and she was now quite prepared to receive him, when he should come, on the most favoured lover terms. But it was no part of her plan to make a confidant of her mother, or to follow the game along the simple lines indicated by the latter; so, to her mother's remark

on Clifford's behaviour, she merely answered in her usual indifferent way—

"Am I my cousin's keeper? I suppose he finds greater attractions elsewhere;" but her recollection dwelling for the moment on her visit to her cousin's chambers, and what she had seen there, she felt in reality a keen desire to know what those attractions were, and how far her suspicions were well founded. Clifford had for the moment a good deal more of interest for her than her manner might seem to indicate.

"I can't make Robert out at all," continued her mother, fretfully. "Here is the best part of June gone and nothing settled."

"It seems to me that we are pretty comfortably settled, considering it is only a furnished house."

"It is all very well to make a joke of it, Blanche, but things can't go on like this for ever. It is not with you that your father will be angry, but with me, if he comes home and finds nothing settled. The burden will all come on my shoulders."

"They are broad enough at any rate, mamma."

"You laugh at your poor old mother, Blanche, but I don't know what she has done that you should treat her in this way. Everything that a girl can want I have got for you; you have only to express a wish, and I try to gratify it, and this is the return I get, to be laughed at by my own daughter. I only hope, Blanche," continued the poor lady, beginning to whimper, "that when you are grown old and have a daughter of your own, she may not make fun of you because you happen to have got a little stout." And Mrs Scallan stopped to wipe her eyes.

"La! mamma, how you make a fuss about nothing! I didn't mean

anything; but you do go on so about making haste, as if I were a mail-steamer, and had to be in by a certain day. It is enough to put any girl out to be told to make love to a man in that way."

"I don't want you to make anything, Blanche; I want him to make love to you. Your father didn't go on shilly-shallying in this way. He proposed plump out before he had seen me a week; he knew I shouldn't dare to refuse him. He was always such a one for getting his own way. But think what your father will say if he comes home and finds nothing settled; and you know he might come any day—he said so in his last telegram; but I suppose he will telegraph again before he actually starts."

As she spoke the words, a servant entered, admitting, as he opened the door, the sound of voices and bustle in the hall below, and announced that Mr Scallan had arrived. And Mrs Scallan, starting up and running out, met her husband at the top of the stairs.

"Well, Molly, old woman, how are you?" said the gentleman, giving her a hasty kiss, and then, as the lady showed an inclination to cling to him, pressing on towards his daughter, whom also he saluted in like way. "Why, Blanche, child, what a beauty we have grown to be sure! London air seems to agree with you; you are looking more buxom than ever. Well, how are you, my dear?" he said, turning back again to his wife; "wearing well, I see. But what is the matter?" he continued, observing that his wife was crying and trembling; "sorry to see me, eh?"

"No, William, you know it is not that," said the poor lady, reproachfully; "but your coming so suddenly, without any letter, or

telegram, or anything,—I can't help feeling a little fluttered; but, however, we have got you at last, so it doesn't matter. You know how glad I am to have you again."

"Why, I told you in my last telegram I might come any day. I started a week sooner than I expected. We got to Liverpool this morning, and just caught the 10.30 train. So here I am, you see."

Mr Scallan was a square-built man of about middle height, with a rather high-coloured weather-beaten face, a good deal of curly brown hair, which he wore rather long, red whiskers, scant on the cheeks but full under the chin, and small restless eyes which never looked straight at the person to whom he was speaking. He was dressed in black cloth trousers and waistcoat, a satin scarf with a diamond pin, and a brown morning coat with large side-pockets. From his appearance he might have belonged to any class in life, but his voice was that of a reasonably well-educated person.

There were, of course, offers of refreshment, and proposals that he should sit down and rest; but Mr Scallan said he had letters to write for the post, and rang for the servant to take some sherry and biscuits into the writing-room. "Well, you have got a fine place here," he said presently, walking up and down the rooms with his hands in his coat-pockets, looking at the chandeliers and the furniture. "Quite in good style, too. And I suppose you are seeing no end of company, eh? By the way, are there any letters for me?"

"Heaps," said Blanche. "I told mamma I was sure you must be coming home, from so many letters being sent on here for you."

"Oh yes, I forgot about the letters," said her mother; "I will

go and get them for you." And she hurried off. It illustrated the relations between the two that it should not occur to the mother to ask the daughter to fetch them, instead of going herself, and that the daughter did not offer to undertake the office.

Blanche fully expected to be at once questioned about her cousin, but her father continued his walk up and down until Mrs Scallan came back, bearing a large number of letters on a tray, which Mr Scallan set on a chair beside him and proceeded to open and look through hurriedly, carrying on the while a disjointed conversation with his wife, or rather, without knowing or attending to what she was saying, answering the questions which the good lady, although seeing that they were inopportune, could not forbear from putting in the flutter and joy of getting back the husband of whom she was equally afraid and fond. Blanche meanwhile, sitting at a little distance, preserved her usual manner. If her father did not care for her, why should she show any particular interest in him?

Presently Mr Scallan, thrusting the letters and their envelopes into the side-pockets of his coat, said he would go down-stairs and send off replies to one or two before dinner. Did not his wife say there was a writing-room down-stairs? "No, don't be at the trouble of coming down," he added, as she rose to accompany him—"I can find the way well enough; all London houses are exactly alike." And poor Mrs Scallan, knowing that it would be imprudent to disturb him when once he had settled down to business, was fain to go out with Blanche for their usual drive, a sad and almost silent one. Accustomed although Mrs Scallan was to her

husband's ways, she was not reconciled to them, especially on such an occasion. For once she could not talk to her daughter, and the latter seldom volunteered to begin a conversation.

When Mr Scallan came out of the writing-room, which was not until the dinner dressing-bell rang, it was apparent from the sparkle of his restless eyes that he had refreshed himself effectually with the sherry while writing his letters; and when he came into the drawing-room, where his daughter was already sitting, the kiss which he gave her—a much more hearty one than that first bestowed—carried a strong flavour of wine. And during dinner he was much more socially inclined than he had been on first arrival. Not, however, that the dinner was very lively. When the master of the house, who has been separated from his family for some months, returning suddenly, does not display any particular interest about their proceedings during his absence, but takes up the conversation just as he might have done had he merely stepped out between lunch and dinner, and at the same time represses, by his manner of reply to their questions, the natural manifestation of eagerness on the part of the others to know what he had been doing during his absence,—the first family meal, under such circumstances, can hardly fail to prove a little formal, and the gaiety flat and forced. The man sitting at the head of the table might have been a mere acquaintance, save that he gave his orders freely to the servants, none of whom had ever seen him before. Still, Mr Scallan, though wearing the manner of a man labouring under some uneasiness, endeavoured to be jovial after a fashion, drinking freely of champagne, and mak-

ing the ladies take wine with him more than once. Yes, the New York belles were very fine girls, beyond a doubt, he observed more than once; but he knew one girl who could hold her own against any belle in New York. And he would be bound to say that the London swells would say the same. "Eh, Blanche? Let us have another glass of champagne over that sentiment. What, no more? Well, then, here's to the belle of Charles Street; Charles Street, isn't it? Here's to the belle of Charles Street; I'll put my money on her, and I don't care who the second may be. Why, you're handsomer than mother was when she was your age, and that's saying a good deal, isn't it, Molly, my girl?"

As all this was delivered before the servants, even Blanche was hardly proof against the shame with which she felt it covered her; but there was something masterful about her father, which made her conceal her annoyance.

After dinner, Mr Scallan, substituting claret for champagne, continued to drink freely, although relapsing into silence, till at last his wife mustering up courage to say that he must have had enough wine, and that he would surely not wish to be left alone the first evening, he rose, and, with the help of the banisters, accompanied the ladies up-stairs.

At first he began to pace up and down the drawing-room, but he staggered so much in his walk that he was fain to come to a halt.

"Blanche, dear," said her mother, presently, "won't you play something to your papa? I am sure he would like to hear you again."

And indeed a movement of some sort was required to break the awkwardness of the situation, as

the two women in silence watched the master of the house trying to stand steady on the hearth-rug before the fireplace, fumbling with his coffee-cup, and muttering now and again, by way of apology, that the long journey made a fellow feel so deuced stiff. Blanche went sullenly to the piano, but in a short time her ministrations became unnecessary, for her father had made his way to an easy-chair, and was fast asleep. And then the young lady went off to her room, leaving Mrs Scallan to get her husband off to bed.

But in the morning Mr Scallan was up as soon as the ladies, bright and active, and, except that he ate scarcely any breakfast, apparently none the worse for the excess of the night. Not that he was talkative; he had sent out for a copy of the 'Observer,' and while the ladies were occupied with their meal, he looked through the money article in a restless way, without troubling himself about the other parts. And it was evident that the news was not all to his taste, for he presently threw down the paper with an expression of disgust, and then sat absently looking at the floor with his hands in his pockets. Scallan, however, was not prone to indulge long in fits of abstraction; he was essentially a man of action, looking forward to plans for the future rather than bemoaning the past. He soon jumped up from his chair, and, walking up and down the room, began to talk indifferently about the London life his wife and daughter had been leading, asking questions, although without attending to the replies. But his wife did not want much inducement to start off with an account of the various entertainments at which she and Blanche had been present. Blanche, if she could prevent it,

would never allow her to expatiate on this subject, although just as keen as her mother about getting invitations which had any flavour of the fashionable world about them. She professed to treat the whole thing as a matter of course; and now secretly chafed at the complacency with which her mother, having found a listener, although an inattentive one, was recounting the joys of the season over again, as they had been presented to her simple tastes.

"Very fine doings indeed, upon my word," said Mr Scallan at last, when the servants had cleared the breakfast away, and Blanche had left the room; "you have been having a fine time of it; too fine a time to last, almost," he added, with a shade of humour in his voice. "Well, you may as well have a merry life, if it is to be a short one."

"A short life, William! what do you mean?" said his wife, in a tone of alarm.

"You need not be afraid, Molly, that any one is going to put an end to you," replied her husband, sarcastically; "only, I suppose, some one will have to pay the piper for all this; operas, and balls, and parties, and what not—and milliners' bills to match, I'll be bound. And all the while I was working out there like a galley-slave."

"I am very sorry, William," said the poor lady; "I quite thought I was carrying out your wishes. I had no idea——"

"Of course you had not, nor had I till a few days ago. But don't suppose I grudge you your amusement. After all, a few halfpence more or less don't matter. In for a penny, in for a pound—those are my principles. And things will come all right again by-and-by, I daresay; they are a little tight, though, just now, and no mistake. But mind you don't give the faint-

est hint about this to a soul, not even to Blanche;" and Mr Scallan as he said this, stopped short in his walk, and gave his wife a sharp stern look, under which she quailed. "You understand?" he continued, looking round at her again, as he resumed his walk; "close is the word, mind—no foolish blabbing of any sort."

"La, William!" replied his wife, "how you frighten me! Of course you may trust me, although I feel in a regular flutter, as it's only natural I should, after what you have said;" and the lady, restraining a strong inclination to cry, wiped her eyes with her handkerchief, and put it away hastily.

"Yes," continued Scallan, as he paced up and down the room, "not a word or a sign of any sort; let everything go on just as before; keep the ball rolling as if your pockets were brimful of money, as they will be in a very short time, I hope; but mum's the word. And now about Clifford,—you haven't told me a word about him yet."

"Ah, William," said his wife, without stopping to retort that he had not yet given her any opportunity of doing so, "I want to speak to you about Robert. I don't at all like the way things are going on between him and Blanche. When first we came to London, it seemed as if everything was progressing just as you could wish, as far as he was concerned. He was evidently quite smitten with his cousin, as well he might be. He was regularly at her feet, as one may say, and only wanted the least bit of encouragement to come forward and declare himself. And now——"

"And wouldn't Blanche give him any encouragement?"

"You know Blanche's way, William. She does not show it with you, perhaps, but she is a little

fond of having her own way. And when she saw me anxious—a little too anxious perhaps—that she should encourage Robert, she rather kept him off. And she kept him off a little too long. I don't find any fault with Blanche, William," she added apologetically, as Mr Scallan stopped in his walk and glared angrily at the carpet, "but she was a little too cold with him. You know the notice she receives is enough to turn any girl's head, and she has rather driven Robert off; for the last few days we have not seen anything of him, and he has cried off two engagements to dinner. He ought to have been here last night."

"He doesn't mean to hand over all his money to Blanche, I suppose; he will come forward all right before the time arrives."

"I don't know what he means or what he doesn't mean. Sometimes, I think, he is quite indifferent to money. And I don't always feel sure that Blanche would have him. I am so glad you have come to settle it all, William; it will be such a load off my mind."

Mr Scallan stood silently looking at the carpet, and his wife continued: "Robert is nearly six-and-twenty now; there are only a few months left."

"Well, you needn't bother yourself about it yet," said her husband, absently; "there is plenty of time. After all, it doesn't so much matter which way it turns out."

"Not matter! Why, I thought that was the very thing we had come to England for. How often have I told Blanche that you had set your mind on carrying out the match, and not giving Robert any excuse for getting out of it! I am sure if I had known you had changed your mind I might have been saved——" A good deal of hard treatment from my daughter,

she might have added; but while at a loss to finish the sentence, her husband interrupted her.

"Tut, tut, that was a long time ago. Life moves fast, Molly, my woman; I have had so many things to think of, they have almost driven Master Robert out of my head. When you have a couple of million dollars or so at stake on a single job, there's no time to bother about a trifle like this."

"Five thousand a-year a trifle? Oh, William, if anything is going to happen to us, think what a comfort it would be to have Blanche comfortably settled. I don't care a bit what happens to myself, or where we have to go, so long as you take me with you; but our girl ought to be provided for, and have a home of her own. She has not been brought up, you know, to rough it as you and I used to do once. Five thousand a-year, William! why, it's more than many a man would know what to do with."

"Blanche would soon show him what to do with it, I'll be bound."

"Yes; and then he must have saved ever so much already. Five thousand a-year he has, and he doesn't spend five hundred!"

"So Robert is a saving man, is he?" asked Mr Scallan, who seemed struck by this aspect of the case.

"Saving! The boy lives like a hermit, in what they call a flat, with an old housekeeper, Simmonds—her that used to be with my poor brother, you know—and one maid-servant, and dines for half-a-crown at his club when he does not dine out. Certainly he bought a horse a short time ago to ride in the Park with Blanche, but he hasn't an expensive taste of any sort; he must have heaps of ready money. If he had anybody else in view, I should say that he did not want to make a match with Blanche, and that he was saving

up out of his income in order to be able to put the will on one side, and marry a girl of his own choice. But I don't think he visits at a single house in town except ours; and he is not one of the sort to have any connection that would waste his money for him. No; depend upon it he is laying by thousands of ready money."

"The deuce he is! Write and ask him to dinner this evening. You have no one coming this evening, I suppose?"

"No, — at least only Captain Burrard, the Honourable Captain Burrard, you know, that was out in the States last fall."

"He is not exactly rolling in wealth, I take it?"

"Oh no, poor fellow, he has only a younger son's allowance, and some director's fees for a company or two he belongs to. But he is very nice, and knows everybody and everything, and so affable and pleasant."

"Well, if you can't put him off."

"Put him off?"

"I didn't ask you to poison him, that you look so frightened. Well, if you can't put off this young sprig of nobility, write sharp and ask Robert too; he will be sure to come when he hears I have arrived. You may tell him that I wish very much to see him, if you like."

"Very good, William; I will send off the note before I go to church."

"Oh, you are going to church, are you? and is Blanche going too?"

"I will see; but I think she is feeling tired, and will keep quiet till the afternoon."

"And so will I." Mr Scallan accordingly passed the morning in the writing-room, and then went out to see a fellow-passenger who was staying at the Langham Hotel, and did not return till late in the afternoon. His wife had waited at home all day, on the chance of his coming home earlier and taking a drive with her.

CHAPTER XXII.

On his return home that Sunday afternoon from a visit to Miss Pasco's school at Richmond, Clifford found his aunt's invitation awaiting him, and had just time to dress and get to Charles Street by eight o'clock. He felt somewhat shy and uneasy as he entered the drawing-room, being aware that his uncle's arrival betokened the hastening of a crisis in his fate; moreover, they had parted on but indifferently good terms, and he was uncertain on what footing they were now to meet. His aunt, too, watched the meeting with anxiety, which was dispelled as Scallan, stepping forward, shook his nephew's hand heartily, and said he was very glad to see him again.

The conversation, however, flagged. Mr Scallan was not given to words; Clifford also was not talkative in society, and having elicited from his uncle that he had been travelling a great deal since they met—all over the States, in fact—neither of them volunteered any further remarks. Blanche too was silent; and Mrs Scallan checked the impulse to expatiate on her pleasurable sensations at the return of the prodigal husband, from a feeling that the latter would probably resent any public manifestation of the kind. It was a relief to all parties when Captain Burrard made his appearance, not more than a quarter of an hour late. Dinner was announced immediately afterwards.

Burrard displayed no surprise at the unexpected appearance of the master of the house. He had seen something of his manner of life when in America, and had heard enough about him from Mrs Scallan to know that he was quick and erratic of movement. But although quiet and self-possessed as usual in his manner, the unlooked-for presence of his host gave Burrard a sudden impulse to act on a line of action which he had been for some time contemplating in an indefinite, irresolute way. Here was an opportunity which ought to be improved for giving effect to his aspirations for seizing fortune: he must make the most of it. He had seen very little of Scallan when in the States, that gentleman even when there having been hardly ever with his family. He must now find out at once what sort of a man he had to deal with.

Mr Scallan, for his part, was at first disposed to be a little ceremonious towards his guest, feeling a sense of awe towards a member of the aristocratic class at this its headquarters, which he had not experienced when they met in America. But Burrard soon put him at his ease.

"I envy you your life, Mr Scallan," he said, as soon as they were seated at table; "your freedom of movement, and the excitement, and the large scale on which you work. I am fond of excitement and travel too, and am going out again to the States shortly; but my excitement is taken in a poor way as becomes a younger son, hunting a few innocent wild animals, and perhaps getting a little fishing in Canada. Now you are a fisher of men, which is a much finer sport. There are large hauls to be made over yonder, I take it, for a master in the craft?"

"Well, sir, you have to under-

stand your business, no doubt; but there are good openings for investment in the States, if you know how to go to work. I am concerned with one or two very promising things just now; in fact, that is what has brought me home rather sooner than I otherwise intended."

"I envy you millionaires," returned Burrard; "but not so much for your millions, as for the fun and excitement of getting them together. But, of course, you want to be very quick and clever; and I suppose you may burn your fingers, too, sometimes."

"You have to look out, sir, no doubt," returned Mr Scallan, who had seemed for an instant to be a little uneasy under the other's careless remark; but you can't go close to the fire without getting warm."

"Quite so. And if you have to do stoker, and shove another fellow in, you may get a bit scorched yourself in the process. I suppose that happens over there even oftener than here."

"It's a great country, sir," said Mr Scallan, not quite sure how far his guest was speaking in jest or earnest; "there's a freedom of movement about it that you don't find at home. Some champagne, Captain? This is a trifle sweet, what you may call ladies' wine. I haven't had time to overhaul the cellar yet; but I hope to be able to give you a better glass of wine the next time you do me the honour of dining here."

"Thanks very much; but I find it safer to stick to light claret; there is a good deal of gout flying about in my family. That is the worst of belonging to an old family—you can't drink old wine."

Burrard saw through his man. Mr Scallan, far from being impressed with the vulgarity of the remark, expressed by his manner

the satisfaction he felt at playing the host to a member of an old family, meanwhile partaking himself freely of the champagne he had found fault with. But whether it was owing to his natural strength of head, or that the friend at the Langham Hotel, with whom he had been lunching, had been sparing of his sherry, he suffered no such collapse as happened on the previous evening, but remained perfectly sober. The conversation kept very much to the line along which it had set out, or if it diverged for a time, Burrard always brought it back. Reference being made to the case of a certain gentleman holding a prominent position in the world of speculation, and whose financial schemes had lately collapsed, Burrard observed that he considered him an ill-used and unappreciated man. Such was the fate of true greatness. People got hold of one particular name, and ran it down without knowing anything about the real facts, while the doings of the small fry, who had been playing just the same game on their own little scale, passed unnoticed. He had, in fact, been too honest, and was paying the penalty. Clifford had never heard his friend speak in this cynical way about money matters before. When, however, Burrard began to talk about the freedom and refreshing aspects of social equality as seen in the States, he recognised a familiar vein of pleasantry. Blanche took little share in the conversation beyond laughing at Burrard's sallies.

"One would think you wanted to become a financial agent yourself," said Clifford to him, after the ladies had risen from the table. "I should not have supposed that sort of thing would be to your liking."

"Not to my liking? I should like it above all things. It is the

finest career going, if you only carry it out on a proper scale. I am a financier, if you can give the name to my trumpery little business in the City. But the thing doesn't pay on a small scale. These great financiers, now, are the new aristocracy. But what is the good of talking about it? I am only a poor younger son, and, to go into this line properly, you must be a capitalist."

"Not a bit of it, my dear sir," broke in Scallan; "brains are of more use than capital any day. Give me the brains," he continued, unconsciously paraphrasing the aphorism of a sometime distinguished person, "and there will always be plenty of people to be found who have the money. Not, of course," he added, with a show of haste, "that I have wanted for capital myself; still, a man who knows what he is about, may begin on nothing, and end with his million or two—ay, with his ten or twelve millions of dollars, if he has reasonable luck. The one thing needful is to be put on the right line, and to know how to work it when once you have got there."

"Ah, I wish I could get on to that line; I flatter myself I should know how to go along it pretty straight, if once I made a start in the right direction."

"Well, sir, if you feel disposed to make a start that way, I think I could give you a lift. We must have some further talk about this, I see, sir."

Both the men were eager. To Burrard, tired of his purposeless life, there seemed to be suddenly opening the prospect of a road to wealth which he had as yet been trying in vain to find. So far, he had been merely dabbling in speculation on a small scale; but even so far he had found out that his wits were as sharp as those of the

people with whom he was mixed up, and only wanted a larger field for exercise to produce great results. He had been made very sensible, too, of the advantage in such a line of business which his social position gave him. Perhaps this might hold good in a larger field. And now the idea which had suddenly possessed him of attaching himself to Scallan in every sense, seemed in a fair way to be fulfilled almost as soon as it was conceived. Why should he not make a plunge at once? With a man like Scallan, here to-day and gone to-morrow, there was evidently no time to be lost. Scallan, no doubt, was accustomed to quick resolve and action. And as Burrard went upstairs, Blanche presented a new interest in his eyes. The mother was certainly not very presentable; but he was not going to marry her. Scallan was rough; but a little eccentricity of manner would set off his great wealth, and be merely an appropriate attribute of a self-made man. He would be a rough diamond, shining, without polish, from natural lustre. And Blanche could stand alone; she had beauty and impudence enough to hold her own against any woman in London.

As Clifford was following Burrard out of the dining-room, Scallan called him back.

"I want to have a word with you," he said, in a low voice; and Clifford, leaving Burrard to go up to the ladies, returned to the dining-room and resumed his seat, while Mr Scallan began to pace up and down the room, pushing the chairs aside to make a path. Presently he stopped in his walk, and looking towards Clifford, but not directly at him, said—

"I was a little put out when we last met, Robert, and I am afraid I showed it; but you must allow

that there was cause. I was disappointed, and I showed it, like a plain man as I am. My brother-in-law had given us every reason to expect that the bulk of his property would come to his sister and her family, and he cut us off without a cent."

"I am sorry you should still be feeling sore on that point, sir. I have said before that I was grieved for your disappointment, and I am ready to say so again; but you must be as well aware as I am, that I had absolutely nothing to do with the disposition which my—my uncle made of the property."

"No, no; I know that well enough. I am not blaming you at all."

"And if the property did come to me, it came, as you know, only provisionally, and under very rigid conditions; it may still go back to your family, directly or indirectly. I conclude that one reason for your all coming to England is to fulfil your part of the conditions imposed on us, and to call on me to fulfil mine."

Clifford said this, feeling that the time had come at last for making the final plunge. The vague hopes and doubts around which he had allowed his fancy to play, must now at last be exchanged for certainty. A week ago and this crisis in his fate might have caused a sense of elation, but now it brought rather a sense of despair. The sentiment which he had tried to call up was no longer at his command. He must bind himself to a woman whose beauty no longer fascinated him; for whose character, so far as he understood it, he had no respect; and who cared for him, he felt sure, even less than he now cared for her. But there seemed no practicable way out of the difficulty. If his cousin was ready to accept him on these terms, he was

bound to complete the contract. What would Hilda say when she heard of this? If he had really gained her heart, how mean and base his conduct must appear and had been!

With a feeling as of despair he awaited his sentence. But to his surprise, Scallan, instead of following up the line opened by him, and at once closing the bargain, replied, "Oh no, I bear you no grudge, my dear boy; let bygones be bygones. Still I am sure you feel that you owe me a good turn, and you may have an opportunity of showing it."

"I shall be only too glad," said Clifford, eagerly, "to show my desire to serve you in any way possible." Could it be that Scallan was going to propose a compromise? If he could only escape by sacrificing even the greater part of his fortune! But no; he knew only too clearly that neither side had any power to alter the conditions. And it would be mean to evince a desire to escape from a contract when he felt in his heart that he was not ready to face the only terms on which escape was possible. He would at least be loyal to his future wife; and her family should not experience the degradation of knowing how little the marriage was sought after by him.

While these thoughts passed through his mind, Scallan had resumed his pacing of the room. Presently he stopped again, and shooting an uneasy glance towards his nephew, while his eyes moved restlessly to and fro over the patterns on the carpet, said at last—

"I don't want to hurry you young folks; there is plenty of time yet. Blanche will like to have her fling, I daresay, before she settles down as a married woman. But there is another

matter in which you might assist me materially."

Clifford remained silent, and Mr Scallan, with visible hesitation, proceeded:

"You know, of course, in what a large way of business I am engaged. My operations are so extensive and widespread that I haven't time to bother myself about trifles. I am in so many things that I have enough to do to keep everything going. But I manage it somehow. They are all doing first-rate—quite first-rate; in fact, I never knew things doing better."

He paused a while, as if still in difficulty about coming to the point, and then continued: "Your aunt has been spending a good deal of money over here, I find; but what does a few hundreds more or less signify, or a few thousands either, when you are dealing with dollars by the million? You see, that is why I have not been giving so much attention to the matter between you and Blanche as perhaps I ought. But the fact is, the girl will be an heiress any way—a great heiress; so what was the good of bothering about a trifle more or less? Why, Blanche, with her prospects, might look to marry a duke."

A ray of hope shone round Clifford. Could it be that his uncle wanted to be off the bargain altogether! If he could speak of five thousand a-year as a trifle, he must indeed be rich, and would naturally want to make a better match for his daughter. Perhaps Mr Scallan was feeling the way to see how far he would take such a proposal to heart, and to break the thing to him gently. And Clifford's first impulse was to declare how ready he was, for his part, to make the sacrifice. But he restrained himself, and merely observed that he was glad his uncle was so prosperous.

"Well, I am prosperous," replied Scallan; "uncommon prosperous—and that's a fact. I don't suppose there's a man in the States who has done better on the whole than I have, or who stands to win so much. Uncommon prosperous I am, certainly; but then, you see, in a business like mine, when there is so much coming and going, one is often a little pressed for ready money. It seems absurd, but so it is. You sometimes have so much of your money out, don't you see, and can't conveniently call it in all at once, just when you want it. Why, only the other day I sold a very pretty little property for fifty thousand dollars which might have fetched seventy if I had waited a bit. It wasn't a real loss, you know, because I very soon turned those fifty thousand dollars over. But it shows you the way we have to work sometimes; incurring a loss one day in order to make a gain the next. Why, just now, although you will hardly believe it, I am actually a bit short of ready money."

"You are most welcome to the use of all I have at my disposal."

"Thank you, my dear boy," said Scallan, eagerly; "I knew I could count on you."

"It is but a mere trifle, I am afraid; for I have no accumulated cash. I drew my quarter's allowance the other day, and the better part of it is still unspent or unappropriated. That is quite at your service, but it is all I have."

Scallan gave an exclamation of astonishment. "The devil! why, what have you done with all your money? You must have drawn ever so many thousands from the estate already."

"Excuse me," said Clifford, "but that is hardly the question."

"True, I beg your pardon; but

when you say that you have nothing in hand, you mean that you have been investing your savings, I suppose? You surely can't have been spending your income?"

"Every penny of it. I have merely a few hundreds at my bankers; to that, as I said, you are most welcome, if such a trifle will be of any service."

Mr Scallan remained silent for a few moments, as if taken aback by this announcement. Then he said,—"Well, I should not have given you credit for being so extravagant. Maria gave me to understand that you were living like a hermit. You haven't been speculating, I hope? Speculation is a very dangerous game; it is worse than gambling." He said this quite gravely, and then added,—"Well, if you can't help me in that way, you could do me a friendly turn by the assistance of your name. Of course it would be a mere matter of form; still, you see, your name would carry weight, as there is good security behind it; and it so happens that just now, in the absence of some of my partners, and people being so slow over here in their way of doing business, oddly enough there is a little temporary difficulty in meeting some of my engagements which it would be very damaging to my credit not to get over. The thing is quite temporary."

"You wish me to give my acceptance, I suppose?"

"Just so. I see you quite understand the position."

"I am afraid I do not. But may I ask how much you would want it for?"

"Well, I am anxious to negotiate bills for a small sum; it is a mere trifle to have a bother about; say for about twenty thousand."

"Twenty thousand pounds! I am afraid that is out of the question. It would take me between

four and five years to pay off such a sum, if I did nothing else."

"Pay it off? What need is there to trouble yourself with thinking about such a thing? There will be unexceptionable securities deposited for the accommodation. The whole thing will be settled in three or four months. Your acceptances will be merely a matter of form. I don't want to depreciate the obligation, which I should value very much as a friendly act, but I would not ask you for a moment to undertake such a thing if there were the smallest risk attaching to it."

There was more to the same purpose. The tale is an old one. No man was ever asked to stand security who was not told it was a mere matter of form, and that there was no risk whatever. But Clifford was firm. Scallan should have every penny he possessed, and welcome, although, unfortunately, it was only a trifle; but he would not become security for a sum he could not pay, however slight the risk might be—and Scallan had said enough to show that it was very real. And as it did not suit the other to quarrel with him, he suppressed his annoyance, saying that it did not signify, and that he would not press him, if the young man was so punctilious; he thought Clifford would have been glad of an opportunity of showing his friendly feeling, but the matter could easily be arranged otherwise. And the two ascended to the drawing-room as if nothing of importance had been under discussion.

When they got up-stairs Burrard and Blanche were sitting together in a corner of the back drawing-room, while Mrs Scallan was asleep in an easy-chair in the front one. Burrard came forward as they entered and began to ask Mr Scallan some questions about business in

America, while his wife awoke and began to rub her eyes, and Robert advanced to the secluded corner still occupied by Blanche, and tried to engage her in conversation. But the young lady was shorter and more scornful in her manner than ever; and Clifford, hurt and angry, after one or two rebuffs got up again and passed into the other room. Nor was Scallan disposed for more conversation. A tray with glasses and bottles being now brought up, he mixed himself a stiff tumbler of brandy-and-water, and stood moodily on the hearth-rug. Clifford shortly took his leave, and declining Burrard's proposal for a walk home, on the plea that he was in a hurry, hailed a passing cab and drove away.

"That young fellow has been imposing on you, Maria," said Mrs Scallan's husband to her, as soon as they were alone. "You gave me to believe that he had saved up a lot of money, and he swears he has not put by a farthing. He says he has spent his income as fast as it came in."

Mrs Scallan was too much astonished to do more at first than stare open-mouthed at her husband as he made this revelation; but at last finding words, she said,—"*Well, I am puzzled.* He has got nothing to show for it, that is quite certain. I could have sworn that he didn't spend five hundred a-year. There never was such a quiet young fellow; he has no expensive tastes of any sort."

"Don't you be too sure of that, Molly. Still waters run deep. I have an idea that Master Robert is a sly fellow. But at any rate he ain't of any use to one, worse luck."

Mrs Scallan saw from the scowl on her husband's face that things had gone wrong between him and his nephew, and restraining her

natural impulse to utter some commonplace exclamation of wonder, she observed,—“Couldn’t you make Blanche hasten on this business with Robert? I have said all I could, but she doesn’t mind me a bit. You can manage her differently. She won’t shilly-shally with you if she sees you are in earnest.”

“I don’t doubt I could make my young lady attend to me; but even supposing that Clifford is willing to come forward and marry her, as of course he is, the thing must take time. You can’t knock off a wedding in a few hours.”

“Not in a few hours, quite, but I could get Blanche’s *trousseau* ready in a——”

“*Trousseau* indeed! he cried, savagely; “you’ve always got dress or nonsense of that sort running in

your silly head. I tell you it’s a matter of a few days—perhaps hours—whether I sink or swim. But what is the good of talking to you about things you don’t understand?” And Mr Scallan, having mixed for himself another stiff glass of brandy-and-water, and lighted a cheroot, began pacing up and down, after his wont, his hands in his pockets, his head bent down; and his wife, seeing that his temper was rising, and that there was an end of his partial confidences, wisely got up to go away.

As she retreated he looked up, and holding out his hand in a menacing way, said, “Not a word, mind, Maria; not the ghost of a hint.”

“You may trust me, William,” replied the poor woman, sadly, and slunk off quietly to her room.

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES.

NO. III.—MARGARET, DUCHESS OF NEWCASTLE.

DURING the centuries of literary culture through which England has passed, there has never been any want of what, in the absence of a better term, we must call female authors—which is, one cannot tell why, a title somewhat derogatory, although the bearers of it, if never reaching the highest level of literature, have yet made their contributions to the grand stock as well as the majority of their contemporaries. Great genius is confined to a few; and it has very rarely, it must be allowed, fallen to the lot of women to possess it—and never at all in the highest degree. That is, however, a question apart from our subject. Women must put up with the inevitable grievance of being classed as “female writers,” just as Horace Walpole’s “royal and noble authors” must support the classification which seems to point them out as fine amateurs superior to, and scarcely worthy of, the full honours of the literary profession. But from the beginning of the ages,—from the dimness of that early period in which the famous Dame Juliana sent so gallantly out of her nunnery, and with so much authority, her treatises upon hunting and hawking, and the blazonry of arms—strange occupations for a prioress,—until the present time, there has seldom appeared a figure so remarkable as that of the “thrice noble, illustrious, and excellent Princess,” the “incomparable Margaret Newcastle,” as Charles Lamb calls her—“Mad Madge,” as her contemporaries said. Her wonderful pretensions in literature, the books she wrote, the philosophies she gave vent to, have dropped out of mortal

ken. Out of the British Museum, or one of the two or three other universal libraries of the nation, it would perhaps be very difficult to find a copy of the ‘World’s Olio,’ or of ‘Nature’s Pictures,’ drawn by Fancie’s Pencil to the life;’ but a tradition of the writer and of her absurdities has floated down to us, and her sketch of her husband’s life and of her own still keeps a certain knowledge of her in the world. In the portrait which she has painted of herself there is small trace of the absurdities and exaggerations with which she has been credited; and though her speculations may be confused and her poetry irregular, these particulars alone—not at all rare in her time—would be quite insufficient to account for the character of eccentricity given to her. Perhaps the fact that she dressed very quaintly after a fashion of her own, and was very shy, though so great a personage, may have more to do with it. Her life was one of great vicissitude and variety. Trained at Court—in the days when Court was first a wandering community chased about by the hazards of war from one place to another, and then an exiled coterie breathing conspiracy and anxious expectation; living half her life upon credit at the head of a banished household; moving from one Netherlandish town to another, conciliating the keen yet charitable burghers; then ending in state and wealth at home,—she led a changeful existence, never without a certain grandeur and luxury, but often without a penny in her purse. The history of the English exiles and emigrants during the troublous

times of our history ; the little communities they made in the picturesque old foreign cities ; the manner in which their noble training and air of command, or the constant possibilities of change in their country, impressed the people around, and provided help for them ; or, more seldom, their own cheerful economies which made the time of waiting possible,—would make an interesting book. From his Grace of Newcastle in Flanders to Sir Patrick Home in Utrecht, there was difference enough—the one awaiting the Restoration, the other the Revolution, to bring him home ; but both accompanied by women, helpers alike and historians, from whom the tale of their bravery and sufferings comes to us. Grizel Baillie's delightful story, however, is told by a third person : Margaret of Newcastle speaks in her own. The book in which this lady's life is recorded by herself, has the following remarkable title-page :—

"Nature's Pictures drawn by Fancy's Pencil to the life.

"Written by the Thrice Noble, Illustrious, and Excellent Princess, the Lady Marchioness of Newcastle.

"In this volume there are several feigned Stories of Natural Descriptions as Comical, Tragical and Tragi-comical, Poetical, Romancical, Philosophical, and Historical, both in Prose and Verse, some all Verse, some all Prose, some mixt, partly Prose and partly Verse. Also there are some Morals, and some Dialogues : but they are as the advantage Loaves of Bread in a Baker's Dozen : and a true Story at the latter End wherein there is no feignings."

"The true story at the latter end" of this curiously compounded volume is the author's personal story—published in her lifetime, as the biography of her husband also was, no doubt to the great satisfaction of those two noble persons. It is not a usual proceeding ; but we are

by no means sure that it would not be an excellent expedient, by way of keeping the autobiographer to his own concerns, and diminishing opportunities for that posthumous malice which seems a temptation too great for any mortal, secure of freedom from all responsibility before his comments are made public, to resist. The Duchess of Newcastle is too great a personage, and she is too much absorbed in her own tale and all its exemplary particulars, to think of other people. Her indifference about dates makes it somewhat difficult to follow her at all times, and leaves the period of her birth in uncertainty ; but it is said to have been in the end of the reign of James I. Her father was Sir Charles Lucas, a gentleman of Essex, of good blood and estate, who died comparatively young—while Margaret, the youngest of his eight children, was an infant. "My father," she says, "was a gentleman : which title is grounded and given by merit, not by princes ; and 'tis the act of time, not of favour,"—a fine description of the title which is still the best that can be given in English to any man, although

"Defamed by every charlatan,
And soiled by all ignoble use."

Though he was not a peer, "yet were there few peers who had much greater estates, or lived more noble therewith." Sir Charles had been "unfortunately fortunate" in killing, in a duel in his youth, a Mr Banks, who was brother to Lord Cobham,—an occurrence which threw a cloud over his life, keeping him in exile and disfavour during the last years of the reign of Elizabeth, though he was pardoned and restored to his home by King James of blessed memory. Here it would seem he lived the peaceful life of a country gentleman, without much distinction or advance-

ment. "The Kingdom being in a happy Peace with all other nations, and in itself governed by a wise king, King James, there was no employment for heroick spirits." Perhaps it was because titles flew about so thickly in those days that the Duchess thinks it necessary thus to apologise for the fact that her father was a mere baronet: "My Father did not esteem Titles, unless they were gained by heroick actions," she adds. Her eldest brother was made Lord Lucas, soon after he became the head of the family, and her husband was elevated from Earl to Marquis, and from Marquis to Duke; so that we can the more easily sympathise in her astonishment at the titleless condition of her father. But what could any one do in those piping times of peace? When war began, then was the time of promotion. "As for my breeding," says the Duchess, somewhat vaguely, "it was according to my birth and the nature of my sex; . . . we were bred Virtuously, Modestly, Civilly, Honourably, and on honest principles." The following account of Lady Lucas's widowed household is, however, more definite:—

"As for our garments, my Mother did not only delight to see us neat and cleanly, fine and gay, but rich and costly—maintaining us to the height of her estate, but not beyond it; for we were so far from being in debt before these wars, as we were rather beforehand with the world—buying all with ready money, not on the score: for although after my Father's death the Estate was divided between my Mother and her Sons, paying such a sum of money for Portions for her Daughters either at the day of their marriage or when they should come to age; yet by reason she and her children agreed with a mutual consent, all their affairs were managed so well, as she lived not in a much lower condition than when my Father lived. 'Tis true my Mother might have increased

her Daughters' Portions by a thrifty sparing, yet she chose to bestow it rather on our breeding, honest pleasures and harmless delights, out of an opinion that if she bred us with needy necessities, it might chance to create in us sharking qualities, mean thoughts, and base actions, which she knew my father as well as herself did abhor. Likewise we were bred tenderly, for my Mother naturally did strive to please and delight her children, not to cross or torment them, terrifying them with threats, or lashing them with slavish whips; but instead of threats, reason was used to persuade us, and instead of lashes the deformities of vice was discovered, and the graces and virtues were presented unto us; also we were bred with respectful attendance, every one being severally waited upon, and all her servants in generall used the same respect to her children (even those that were very young) as they did to herself. . . . As for tutors, although we had for all sorts of vertues, as singing, dancing, playing on musick, reading, writing, working, and the like, yet we were not kept strictly thereto; they were rather for formality than benefit, for my Mother cared not so much for our dancing and fiddling, singing, and prating of several languages, as that we should be bred virtuously, modestly, civilly, and on honest principles."

This natural and pretty course of education went on, sometimes in the country-house near Colchester, St John's, where the children had been born, sometimes in London, where Lady Lucas spent half of every year. Her daughters lived with her, evidently even after they were married, in the country—with happy visits now and then from the adventurous brothers, who were scattered over all the earth, serving in the wars under the States of Holland and other masters; but when in London, "they were dispersed into several houses of their own; yet for the most part they met every day, feasting each other like Job's children." The description of the brothers especially, of whom there

were three, is brief but animated. The family historian can enter into few particulars of their training, since, in the first place, they were brought up in her infancy or before she was born; and again, because the breeding of men is so different from that of women: "but this I know," she adds, "that they loved Virtue, endeavoured Merit, practised Justice, and spoke Truth." The two younger were soldiers, one of them having "a practick Genius to the warlike arts, or Arts in War, as Natural Poets have to Poetry." The elder, Lord Lucas, though not less valiant, was more learned than either, being a great scholar, and "given much to studious contemplation." Their life and manners are thus quaintly summed up:—

"Their practice was, when they met together, to exercise themselves with Fencing, wrestling, shooting, and such like exercises: for I observed they did seldom or never dance, or play on Musick, saying it was too effeminate for Masculine Spirits; neither had they skill, or did use to play, for ought I can hear, at Cards or Dice, or the like games, nor given to any vice as I did know, unless to love a mistress were a crime—not that I know anything bad but what report did say; and usually reports are false, at least exceed the truth."

This scornful forestalling of any reproach that might be addressed to them on a subject which ladies are generally supposed to regard with little tolerance, is characteristic. The Duchess makes a similar remark in respect to her own husband, which makes her toleration still more remarkable. "I know him not addicted to any manner of Vice," says this brave lady, "except that he has been a great lover and admirer of the Female Sex; which whether it be so great a crime as to condemn him for it, I'll leave to the judgment of young Gallants and beautiful Ladies." It was in

the days of the Second Charles that her Grace wrote, when society was not strait-laced: and there can be no doubt that a great lady, used to contemplate the world from a high elevation, and compelled by her very position to content herself with the compromises that make life practicable, however far these may be from perfection, is apt to be more charitable than humbler women on this point; but it is curious to see her feminine heat in the very weakness of her position, and fine scorn of censorious spirits—"if it be so great a crime." She was a wife of the most devoted kind, so that her charity at least was not without cost to herself.

Nothing could be more affectionate or harmonious than the picture set before us of the Lucas family, meeting every day, "feasting each other like Job's children." In this pleasant group the mother has of right the first place. Her beauty, we are told, "was beyond the ruin of time; for she had a well favoured loveliness in her countenance, and a well-tempered complexion, as neither too red nor too pale." She was a good mistress to her servants, "taking care of them in their sickness, and in their health exacting no more from them than they could with ease, or rather like pastime, do." Sometimes she would be angry, the tender historian allows, "but never with her children—the sight of them would pacify her." Sometimes she would complain that her family was too great for her management, yet "took a pleasure and some little pride in the governing thereof." "She was very skilful in Leases, and setting of lands and court-keeping, ordering of stewards, and the like affairs." In misfortunes she was of "a heroick spirit in suffering patiently when there was no remedy," and had about her "such a Majestic Grandure"

as struck awe to the rudest. While all the young households that looked to her as their centre, entertained each other and took their share of gaiety, as we shall presently see, this noble lady stayed at home, no doubt like Job too, offering sacrifices and prayers for them in case any should offend in the heedlessness of their youth. "She made her house her Cloyster, enclosing herself as it were therein, for she seldom went abroad unless to Church," keeping a constant memory of her dead husband, who remained "so lively in her memory as she never mentioned him, though she spoke often of him, but love and grief caused tears to flow." Among her eight children "there was not any one crooked or any ways deformed," but "well-featured, clear complexions, brown haire, but some lighter than others; sound teeth, sweet breaths, plain speakers, tunable voices," says our biographer, with modest pride. This tunefulness of voice, however, did not mean, she hastens to tell us, any proficiency in singing, which, and all other mere accomplishments, her Grace seems to have held lightly, as unnecessary to persons of gentle blood; nor will she say that her sisters were handsome, "although many would say they were very handsome." In this point gentlewomen of established position could evidently afford to be indifferent. In the country these ladies would "reade, work, walke, and discourse with each other." In town they lived a livelier life.

"To rehearse their recreations. Their customs were in Winter-time to go sometimes to plays, or to ride in their coaches about the streets to see the concourse and recourse of People; and in the Spring-time to visit the Spring-Garden, Hide Park, and the like places; and sometimes they would

have Musick, and sup in Barges upon the Water. These harmless recreations they would pass their time away with; for I observed they did seldom make visits, nor never went abroad with Strangers in their company, but only themselves in a Flock together, agreeing so well that there seemed but one Minde amongst them. And not only my own Brothers and Sisters agreed so, but my Brothers and Sisters-in-law, and their children, although but young, had the like agreeable natures and affectionate dispositions; for to my best remembrance, I do not know that ever they did fall out, or had any unkind and angry disputes."

This curious picture is a little marred by its very excellence, for we fear my Lady Walter and my Lady Killigrew, driving about in their coaches to see the concourse of people, with nobody but their family coterie to talk to, and even "no familiar conversation or intimate acquaintance with the Families to which each was linkt in marriage," must have had but a narrow conception of life. It is curious to find this little family clique shut up in its own prejudices and traditions at a time when so many novel and tragic elements were working in the country. Probably their very domesticity and affectionateness, which their sister finds so admirable, was one reason why the changes for which they were so unprepared struck so many Cavalier families with such bitter force. "This unnatural War came like a whirlwind which fell'd down their Houses," she adds. And, indeed, it is like a dissolving view to see these graceful stately people in their coaches one while, the Lady-mother abiding at home, the young ones taking their recreations; and anon to find them dispersed and vanished, "knowing not how each other lived"—one brother dead in the war, the rest "sequestered from their lands and livings," their woods cut down,

their houses destroyed, their money gone. "My mother lived to see the ruin of her children, which was her ruin; and then dyed," says the narrator with pathetic brevity. How sudden an interruption of all that easy splendour and narrow wealthy prosperity! One regrets most of all the noble old lady who sate at home and took "a pleasure and some little pride" in the governing of her household, and was pacified in her anger if she but saw one of her children. The others scrambled through somehow, and got back, most of them, at the end, to some approach to their former wellbeing; but old Lady Lucas died of it—the good mother, the good mistress, that she was.

As for Margaret, the youngest of the family, she had little share, after her extreme youth, in this family life. While still very young, "when the Queen was in Oxford," a great desire to be one of the maids of honour seized her. She had "never been from home, and seldom out of the sight" of her family; and though the indulgent mother was won by her entreaties, the brothers and sisters were very reluctant to allow the little one of the family to go away into the dangers of that new life. She had the advantage, besides, of being "so bashful," that the ordeal was doubly severe to her, though it was of her own seeking. A shy, eager, ambitious, impetuous girl, her young imagination had no doubt been set on flame by the idea of the suffering and afflicted Queen, of royalty in distress, and the heroism of ministering to the sacred sufferers. She tells us too, in another place, that she was always ambitious—ambitious of the highest place, and the best occupation, and the loftiest company. It is curious that there is little or nothing of that distressed and wandering Court, the circum-

stances of which were so romantic and touching, in the whole narrative. The Duchess says nothing about her Royal Mistress, nor the wonderful convulsions of feeling that must have swept through the little banished band in its poor relics of finery, and hungry, oft-disappointed hopes. She must have been with the Queen through the most painful moments; but she never throws the slightest illumination upon the mind of Henrietta Maria, or on the doings of her Court. What a contribution to the history of the time she might have given us!—a shy, imaginative spectator, seeing everything, her lively fancy springing to meet every new event, her keen youthful ears hearing all that went on, her soul full of romantic sympathy and loyal enthusiasm. How the distracted camp at Oxford, the excited antechambers at St Germain's, might have disclosed themselves, with all their plots and dangerous designs, their whispers of jealousy and detraction, their grudges and envying! But nothing of all this are we told. The only thing we see against this troublous background is the little figure of the girl, confused, timid, silent, yet with a great fanciful ambition surging in her—ambition for she knew not what. It had cost her a great deal to banish herself out of her "mother's, brothers', and sisters' sight, whose presence used to give me confidence"—so much that she felt she had "no longer any foundation to stand on, or guide to direct me;" but yet she held on.

"I had heard that the world was apt to lay aspersions even on the innocent, for which I durst neither look up with my eyes, nor speak, nor be any way sociable, insomuch as I was thought a Natural Fool. Indeed I had not much wit, yet I was not an Idiot—my wit was according to my

years; and though I might have learned more wit and advanced my Understanding by living in a Court, yet being dull, fearfull, and bashfull, I neither heeded what was said or practised, but just what belonged to my loyal duty and my honest reputation; and indeed I was so afraid to dishonour my friends and family by my indiscreet actions, that I rather chose to be accounted a Fool than to be thought rude or wanton. In truth, my bashfulness and fears made me repent my going from town to see the world abroad; and much I did desire to return to my mother again, or to my sister Pye, with whom I often lived when she lived in London, and loved with a supernatural affection; but my mother advised me then to stay."

This little frightened figure, c'inging to her "loyal duty" and "honest reputation" as to a rope of safety in a stormy sea, not able to attend to anything that is going on for the panic she is in lest she should misconduct herself and bring trouble upon her family, yet holding fast by her little post in a kind of desperation, is very curious. All the after-eccentricities of Margaret of Newcastle might no doubt be explained by this mingling of shyness, pride, ambition, and obstinacy. We are tempted to introduce as a companion picture the rules made for herself by another maid of honour in a Court less decorous than that of Henrietta Maria. Mistress Mary Blagge, afterwards Mrs Godolphin, was in attendance upon Queen Catherine of Braganza, the wife of Charles II., a generation later, about the time when the other little maid of honour, then developed into the illustrious and excellent Princess, Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, came, stately and always odd, to Court, with train-bearers, who stayed in the ante-room, carrying a train some thirty or forty yards long, as Scott records. She was but nineteen when she

left off this perilous occupation, having been twelve when she was placed about the royal person. But Mary Blagge was more than a frightened little girl; she was a young saint, full of that ascetic, yet not altogether unworldly, devotion which distinguishes Anglican Puritanism. In her diary this care of her reputation which made Margaret Lucas content to be supposed rather a "Natural Fool" than bring any discredit on her family, is mingled with a great deal more of sensitive and delicate religious feeling than our Duchess exhibits. Here, however, is a very fit pendant to Margaret's description of herself. It is an extract from the rules which her young successor set herself to observe in her life:—

"When I goe into the Withdrawing-room, lett me consider what my calling is,—to entertain the Ladys, not to talke foolishly to men, *more especially the King*; lett me consider if a Traytor be hateful, she that betrays the soul of one is much worse—the danger, the sin of it. Then without pretending to witt, how quiet and pleasant a thing it is to be silent, or, if I doe speake, that it be to the glory of God!"

The code of this young lady contains many clauses of a similar kind. "Talke little"—"Hold my peace what jest soever they may make"—"If you speak anything they like, *say 'tis borrowed*, and be humble when commended," are her rules. Thus it would seem in both reigns that the young favourites of the Court had a burden laid upon them which it needed premature wisdom to bear. A virtuous young opera-dancer encountering all the perils of the ballet could not take greater precautions. "*Be sure never to talk to the King*," Mrs Godolphin repeats. This at least was a risk which Margaret Lucas, shy and downcast, had not to fear.

But there now appears another personage upon the scene at St Germans whom the shy little maid of honour no doubt regarded from her corner with admiring but somewhat alarmed eyes. This was the Marquis of Newcastle, a great noble and soldier, who had made great sacrifices for the cause of the King, raising regiments in his own north country, making large offerings of money, and devoting himself and his family to the military service of Charles. He must have been by this time in the prime of life, a gallant gentleman. Beginning life as plain Sir William Cavendish, though of a distinguished lineage on both sides, he had been created Baron, Viscount, Earl, and Marquis in rapid succession, and had been intrusted with the charge of the Prince of Wales, whose governor he was for several years.

"He was a very fine Gentleman," says Clarendon, "active and full of courage, and most accomplished in those Qualities of Horsemanship, Dancing, and Fencing which accompany a good breeding; in which his delight was. Besides that, he was amorous in Poetry and Musick, to which he indulged the greatest part of his time; and nothing could have tempted him out of those paths of pleasure which he enjoy'd in a full and ample Fortune, but Honour and Ambition to serve the King when he saw him in distress and abandoned by most of those who were in the highest degree obliged to him and by him. He lov'd Monarchy, as it was the foundation and support of his own greatness; and the Church, as it was well constituted for the splendour and security of the Crown; and Religion, as it cherished and maintained that Order and Obedience that were necessary to both; without any other passion for the particular opinions which were grown up in it, and distinguished it into parties, than as he detested whatsoever was likely to disturb the Publick Peace."

This curious kind of support, impartial and high-handed, as of one

who upheld those great institutions, spiritual and secular, with a view to the interests of the public and his own pre-eminence, rather than from piety or loyalty in the abstract, qualities a little too common for such a potentate—is eminently characteristic of a grand seigneur; and a very grand seigneur he was, going down to his own country to raise his little army, and pursuing his career, if with great devotion to the King, yet with a little contempt of order and rule in his own person. Several of the acts which his wife records have all the personal aspect of a sovereign's supreme will, if indeed any sovereign ever acted so arbitrarily, without the screen of some Minister of State to take or divide the responsibility. Thus, at Durham, for instance, when my lord had "reduced" certain rebels "to their obedience and duty," he "took great care of the Church Government in the said Bishoprick," appointing that learned and excellent divine the then Dean of Peterborough, afterwards Lord Bishop of Durham, "to view all sermons that were to be preached, and suffer nothing in them that in the least reflected against his Majesty's Person and Government, but to put forth and add whatsoever he found convenient, and punish those that should trespass against; in which that worthy Person used so much care and industry, that never the Church could be more happily governed than it was at that present." This is a new duty for bishops, and one that might be of great service to the public were it resumed. What the condition of the poor prelate's brain would be after the perusal of all the sermons of all the curates, we prefer not to ask; but of how much advantage to us, the long-suffering people, upon whom all these compositions are usually poured

forth! On another occasion, scarcely so remarkable, my lord exercised his power of directing the popular judgment somewhat summarily. He discovered that it was the intention of the city of York to choose to itself a new mayor.

“My lord, who knew that the Mayor for the year before was a person of much loyalty and discretion, declared his mind unto them: That he thought it fit to continue him Mayor also for the year following; which it seems they did not like, but resolved to choose one which they pleased, contrary to my Lord’s desire. My Lord perceiving their intentions, about the time of the Election sent orders to the Governor of the city of York to permit such Forces to enter the city as he should send; which being done accordingly, they, upon the day of the Election, repaired to the Townhall, and with their Arms, staid there, until they had continued the said Mayor according to my Lord’s desire.”

Thus with royal imperiousness the great north-country prince managed the region put under his care: but not without jars and contradictions, his Majesty now and then taking a fancy to a troop which the Marquis had raised, and keeping them for his own service: and interfering in other unpleasant ways with his General’s plans and arrangements. What smouldering discontents there may have been in his mind, however, burst forth when—after being besieged in this same city of York by the armies both of the Parliament and the Scots, and relieved by Prince Rupert—that hotheaded soldier, without his help, and contrary to his advice, instead of letting the rising strife between the Scots and the Parliamentarians work in the aid of the King’s party, rashly gave battle to both, and met with the disastrous defeat of Marston Moor. The rash Prince marched the remnant of his forces away when this

defeat was accomplished, leaving it to the Marquis to redeem the fortunes of the day as well as he could. But my Lord of Newcastle was sick of the whole business, offended by the Prince’s interference, disgusted with and hopeless of the general aspect of affairs; and without further ado “he took a Resolution, and that justly and honourably, to forsake the Kingdom.” Never was anything done more summarily. He was gone from all his offices, his Generalship and Governorship, before people were aware that he had budged, and marching hurriedly across the country to Scarborough, disappeared once for all from the struggles of the Great Rebellion and from the party of the King’s defenders. “The like was never done or heard or read of,” says Clarendon; though he argues that the Marquis was so utterly tired with a condition and employment so contrary to his humour, nature, and education, that it was “a greater wonder that he sustained the vexation and fatigue of it so long, than that he broke from it with so little circumspection.” The Duchess naturally passes over the singular features in this story. She was very young, and no doubt accepted it as it was told to her, without the least doubt that my lord was right in throwing up everything when he found himself no longer able to keep the upper hand. That such a hero should suffer defeat and make terms with his inferiors, would have been a downfall not to be thought of—that he had behaved himself “like an honest man, a Gentleman, and loyal Subject,” Prince Rupert had testified; and whatever the King might think, whom he had left behind in the hottest of his struggle, it is evident that the Queen in Paris received him with no disfavour. King Charles’s ways were not perhaps

calculated to induce a man of sense, thoughtfulness, and much fastidiousness, who had not Falkland's natural heroism or sublime fidelity, to sacrifice his personal pride as well as his possessions to the royal cause. One wonders, from an entirely different point of view, how a man of such pretensions and character, accustomed to command, and who had acted so much like an independent prince at the head of his troops, should have thrown up, not only a great public position, but the free air and movement of a great crisis, however tragical, for the stagnant existence of an exile, which awaited him in the dull atmosphere of those Flemish towns. The French *émigrés* who abandoned their country during its terrible Revolution struggle, do not secure as much of our sympathy as they perhaps deserve; but these generally thrifty and poverty-stricken deserters were very different from the great English lords, living a comparatively sumptuous life on credit, and overawing the burgomasters into continual loans and subsidies—who gave themselves up to horsemanship or some other characteristic diversion, while their cause was being lost across the Channel and their country rent in twain.

There is no question of this, however, in the memoirs of her husband, —a sort of second autobiography—which the Duchess contributes to our knowledge of her time. In this, notwithstanding the chivalrous character of the hero, we are bound to admit the chief question is money—a question which must have been foremost in the thoughts of the anxious little Court and all its dependants. The Marquis had laid the Dutchmen under contribution from the moment he landed on their shores. He had but £90 when he set sail from Scarborough with a retinue which

filled two ships—and “had no means left” when he got to Hamburg; but we find him immediately after giving £160 for “nine horses of an *Holsatian* breed,” which no doubt were needed to draw carriages of his *cortège*, “one coach, one chariot, and two waggon,” through Holland and across France to Paris. He presented seven of these horses to the Queen when he ended his journey. When he reached Paris we are not informed, nor how long his steps were stayed by some stray glance from the eyes which Margaret Lucas kept so often cast down. Perhaps the Queen and her ladies entertained the splendid deserter with some anxious hope of persuading him to take up his sword again; but if this was so, it came to nothing. Nor are we permitted to glean any particulars of the romance which went on in the antechambers, or of the sudden attraction which drew this middle-aged and magnificent exile towards the shy maid of honour. Duchess Margaret would have us believe that romance had little to do with it. “He having but two sons,” she says, with the plain-spoken directness of the time, and with much personal humility, “proposed to marry me, a young woman, that might prove fruitful and increase his Posterity by a Masculine Offspring;” while she, on the other hand, with a delicacy worthy of a *Précieuse*, gravely protests against any suspicion of too warm an attachment on her part. Her gentle decorum, abashed at the idea of passion, yet so entirely enthusiastic in its Puritan reserve, could scarcely be more prettily expressed:—

“Though I did dread marriage, and shunned men's companies as much as I could, yet I could not, nor had not, the power to refuse him—by reason my affections were fix'd on him, and

he was the only Person I ever was in love with. Neither was I ashamed to own it, but gloried therein; for it was not Amorous Love, I never was infected therewith; it is a Disease or a Passion, or both, I only know by relation, not by experience: neither could Title, Wealth, Power, or Person entice me to love: but my Love was honest and honourable, being placed upon Merit, which Affection joy'd at the fame of his worth, pleased with delight in his Wit, proud of the respects he used to me, and triumphing in the Affections he profess for me, which Affections he hath confirmed to me by a deed of time, seal'd by Constancy, and assigned by an unalterable decree of his promise, which makes me happy in despite of Fortune's frowns. For though Misfortunes may and do often dissolve base, wilde, loose, and ungrounded Affections, yet she hath no power of those that are united either by Merit, Justice, Gratitude, Duty, Fidelity, or the like: and though my Lord hath lost his Estate and banish'd out of his Country for his Loyalty to his King and Country, yet neither despised Poverty nor pinching Necessity could make him break the Bonds of Friendship, nor weaken his Loyal Duty to his King and Country."

This almost lyrical outburst of enthusiasm shows how her Grace's feelings occasionally run away with her, and at the same time tempers delightfully her profession of a sober "love founded on Merit," which she considers so different from the "Amorous Love" which is "a Disease or a Passion, or both." It is pleasant to know that "my Lord the Marquis of Newcastle did approve of those bashful fears that many condemned;" and that, on the other hand, the poor lady's failure to help in the object of his desires—to wit, "Masculine Offspring"—did yet "never lessen his Love and Affection for me." He must have been in the full force of middle age—his sons by his first marriage being already in the way of having "proffers made of

Rich Matches in England,"—a handsome and courtly person, at the period of his second union. "His shape is neat and exactly proportioned," says his admiring wife, "his stature of a middle size, and his complexion sanguine. His behaviour is such that it might be a Pattern for all Gentlemen; for it is courtly, civil, easy, and free without Formality or Restraint, and yet hath something in it of grandeur that causes an awful respect towards him." Perhaps Margaret Lucas, young and bashful, had never come in direct contact with such a noble gentleman before.

The life of the new-married pair was not, however, without troubles. The want of money, it has been said, was the chief feature in it. The noble emigrants did not stint themselves as the French *émigrés* did, or address themselves to occupations, however humble, in which they could earn their living—which indeed is an expedient impossible to think of in connection with so splendid a person as his Grace of Newcastle; but they flung themselves with undoubting courage upon the purses of the citizens in those old, wealthy, usurious, money-loving Flemish towns, and even upon the *négociants* of Paris, with a confidence in their own houses and lands beyond the seas which, firm as was the Lord Protector's hand, these impartial lookers-on seem to have shared. Sometimes necessity might administer a momentary pinch; but generally, the aspect of affairs had a tragico-ludicrous air, and no real harm in it, as the following example will show:—

"After my Lord was married, having no Estate or Means left him to maintain himself and his family, he was necessitated to seek for credit, and live upon the courtesie of those that were pleased to trust him; which, though they did for awhile, and

show'd themselves very civil to my Lord, yet they grew weary at length, insomuch as his Steward was forced one time to tell him that he was not able to provide a Dinner for him, for his Creditors were resolved to trust him no longer. My Lord being always a great master of his Passions, was, at least show'd himself, not in any manner troubled at it, but in a pleasant humour told me that I must of necessity pawn my Cloaths to make so much money as would procure a Dinner. I answered that my Cloaths would be but of small value, and therefore desired my waiting-maid to pawn some small Toys which I had formerly given her, which she willingly did. The same day, in the afternoon, my Lord himself spake to his Creditors, and both by his civil deportment and persuasive arguments, obtained so much that they did not onely trust him for more necessaries, but lent him besides to redeem those Toys that had been pawned."

Incidents of this character are of constant occurrence; and considering that the exile lasted from 1644 till the Restoration, about sixteen years, the courtesy and faith of the Netherlanders, among whom my Lord soon established himself, and his own never-failing confidence and certainty of recovering possession of his fortune, is wonderful. Nor during those years did he deny himself. When he travelled, his equipage consisted of one coach, in which were stowed away three noble persons, besides my lady's waiting gentlewoman, "and some others;" "one little chariot that would onely hold my Lord and myself; and three waggons, besides an indifferent number of servants on Horseback." When he settled down, his living was "at a great charge, keeping an open and noble table for all comers." His chief amusement, too, was of a costly kind. He was "a great lover and master of the art of Mannage," *manège*—meaning, apparently, no more than horsemanship,

since no intimation is given that my lord attempted to turn an honest penny by either breeding or breaking horses. "He bought a Barbary horse for that purpose, which cost him 200 pistoles, and soon after another Barbary horse from the Lord Crofts." The finest people in the world, reigning dukes and princes, came to see him ride; and with his horses, and his coaches, and his open table, and the great people who paid him visits, he does not seem to have lived by any means a dull or dreary life. He settled finally in Antwerp, in a house that belonged to "the widow of a famous Picture-drawer, Van Rubens." All these details the Duchess gives with much care and composure. But in all this lingering life, with its endless trouble about money, there is not a word of the troubles, so much darker and more tragic, which were going on on the other side of the Channel, and which, we should have imagined, would have taken up so much of the thoughts of the English emigrants. They must have been at Antwerp when Charles I. perished at Whitehall,—an event which startled all Europe, and which must have moved—almost to madness, one would think—the Cavaliers everywhere. But not a word does the Duchess say of this tragic incident. Not even the shadow of it, no reference to any sorrow or agitation in respect to public events, finds its way into her calm record. This seems almost inconceivable. A reader unacquainted with the history of the time would not find any indications in this Royalist biography that the King had died otherwise than peacefully in his bed: which is as strange an instance of the importance of small matters near, in comparison with great ones far away, as could be found. To talk over a

burgomaster into a new loan is of itself an exciting process, and takes up the operator's thoughts; and news would be uncertain, and a thousand rumours always flying about; and the health of the Barbary horse was delicate. There are always so many things to be thought of nearer home.

But the glimpses of an existence so limited and so difficult, yet at the same time not without comforts of its own, are very curious. Looking back into those mists of the past, to see, perhaps, our Duchess Margaret, in some quaint gown of her own invention, overwhelming with her grand State curtsey that very Helena Forman, with her lively brown eyes and double chin (or chins), whom the picture-drawer Van Rubens—Peter Paul himself, no less—has made so familiar to us,—what a brave sight! The solid handsome Dutchwoman has a *petit air éveillé* under her *chapeau de poil*, which looks as if she would have driven a dear bargain with the English grandes who lived so nobly and freely without any money, and filled the rooms in which Rubens had painted, with so much fine company. The pretty fantastic young lady, with her head full of high-flown fancies, self-conscious always and shy, not recovered yet from her first panic at life, and alarm lest she should discredit her family; and the noble hero of a husband, too fastidious and proud for the wear and tear of life, “amorous of poetry,” and impatient of toil and care, with a grand consciousness of inalienable wealth and power about him, though penniless, which imposes upon the burghers—make the most picturesque variety in those antique streets, with their peaked gables, and all their fresh recollections of the Spaniard. The city pleased the English visitors. The inhabi-

tants were “the civilest and best-behaved people that ever I saw,” the Duchess tells us; and “my Lord lived there with as much content as a man of his condition could do, and his chief pastime and divertisement consisted in the Mannage of the two afore-mentioned horses.” When the Barbary horse died, it may be imagined what a loss it was; but by-and-by he “obtained so much credit,” that he was able to buy two others, and by degrees got as many as eight into his stable. When impertinent strangers, aware perhaps of the want of money in the noble establishment, ventured to ask questions about the price of one, for example, “whom my Lord loved above the rest, and called his favourite—a fine Spanish horse,” the Marquis answered as haughtily as the Sibyl, “The price of that horse is £1000 to-day; to-morrow it will be £2000,” he said; which irony so discountenanced “the chapman,” that he took his leave and disappeared. The Duke of Guise made the same mistake in respect to “a grey leaping-horse,” for which he offered 600 pistoles; “but my Lord was so far from selling that horse, that he was displeased to hear that any price should be offered for him. So great a love hath my Lord for good horses!” “Of all sorts of horses, my Lord loved Spanish horses and Barbes best, saying, ‘That Spanish horses were like princes, and Barbes like gentlemen in their kind.’”

Not long after the household was settled in Antwerp, affairs came to one of the oft-repeated crises which were always tided over with so much success. “We grew extremely necessitated,” the Duchess says, “Tradesmen being there not so rich as to trust my Lord for so much.” At the same time news came that the Marquis's estates were to be sold, and that the wives of the

owners were to have an allowance from the purchase - money. On this strong inducement she made up her mind to go to England, accompanied by her husband's brother, Sir Charles Cavendish, who was ordered to return and live on his estate or to forfeit it. The character here given of Sir Charles is a noble one, agreeing entirely with Clarendon, who describes him as "a man of the noblest and largest mind, though the least and most inconvenient Body that lived." The Duchess says nothing about the "inconvenient Body." She admitted no inconveniences in those she loved. "I will lament him as long as I live," she cries. "I will build his monument of Truth, though I cannot of Marblé, and hang my tears and scutcheons on his Tombe. He was nobly virtuous, wisely valiant, naturally civil, honestly kind, truly loving, virtuously temperate;" and so on with many more quaint and carefully balanced laudations. Under the protection of this devoted friend she went to England to see what could be done for the improvement of the family circumstances. She had already got all that it was possible to get from her brother, Lord Lucas, and all friends who could be made available. But this public appearance before the Roundheads, whom she hated, was worse than all beside. One can easily imagine the perturbation of the shy and proud young woman to whom it would have been difficult in any case to conceal her sentiments in respect to the new lords and masters who were disposing of her husband's lands. The reader, whatever may be his political sentiments, will sympathise with her very natural indignation and wrath:—

"When I came there I found their hearts as hard as my fortunes, and their natures as cruel as my miseries, for they sold all my Lord's estate,

which was a very great one, and gave me not any part thereof, or any allowance thereout, which few or no other was so hardly dealt withall: indeed I did not stand as a beggar at the Parliament door, for I never was at the Parliament house, nor stood I ever at the door, as I do know or can remember—I am sure not as a Petitioner; neither did I haunt the Committees, for I never was at any as a Petitioner but one in my life, which was called Goldsmith's Hall; but I received neither gold nor silver from them, only an obstinate refusall. I should have no share of my Lord's Estate: for my brother, Lord Lucas, did claim in my behalf such a part of my Lord's Estate as wives had allowed them; but they told him, that by reason I was married since my Lord was made a Delinquent, I could have nothing, nor should have anything, he being the greatest Traitor to the State, which was to be the most loyal Subject to his King and Country; but I whisperingly spoke to my brother to conduct me out of that ungentlemanly place: so without speaking to them one word, good or bad, I returned to my lodgings; and as that Committee was the first, so was it the last I ever was at as a Petitioner."

The tremulous retreat of the indignant young wife who could not remain to hear her husband insulted, and her whispered contempt of "the ungentlemanly place," is very natural and attractive. She bursts out in her anger into agitated comments upon the change made in the customs of England, and how women have become pleaders, attorneys, petitioners, and the like, running about with their various causes. "Our Sex doth nothing but jostle for the Pre-eminence of words," she says; "but if our Sex would but well consider and reasonably ponder, they will perceive and find that it is neither words nor place that can advance them, but worth and merit." Whatever the others might do, she was too proud and delicate to subject herself to further refusal. "The

pains were more than the gains," she cries. She was "unlearned in their uncouth ways," ignorant where the power lay, and not a good flatterer. At the same time, it is evident that she has a little prick of compunction in respect to this weakness of hers, perhaps feeling that the dolorous condition of affairs in Antwerp ought to have stirred her up to greater exertions, which leads her to the following bit of special pleading and self-excuse:—

"Besides, I am naturally Bashful, not that I am ashamed of my minde or body, my Birth or breeding, my actions or Fortunes, for my bashfulness is in my nature not for any crime; and though I have strived and reasoned with myself, yet that which is inbred I find is difficult to root out. But I do not find my Bashfulness is concerned with the qualities of the persons but the number, for were I entered among a company of Lazarones I should be as much out of countenance as if they were all Cæsars or Alexanders, Cleopatras or Queen Didoes. Neither do I find my Bashfulness visible so often in Blushes as contracts my Spirits to a chill paleness; but the best of it is, most commonly it soon vanisheth away, and many times before it can be perceived; and the more foolish or unworthy I conceive the company to be, the worse I am; and the best remedy I ever found is to persuade myself that all those Persons I meet are wise and virtuous. The reason I take to be is, that the wise and virtuous censure less, excuse most, praise best, esteem rightly, judge justly, behave themselves civilly, demean themselves respectfully, and speak modestly, when fools or unworthy persons are apt to commit absurdities. . . . And though I never met such sorts of ill-bred creatures, yet naturally I have such an Aversion to such kind of People as I am afraid to meet them, as children are afraid of Spirits, or those that are afraid to meet or see Devils, which makes me think this natural defect in me, if it be a defect, is rather a fear than a bashfulness; but whatsoever it is, I find it troublesome, for it hath many times obstructed the passage of

my speech and perturbed my natural actions, forcing a constrainedness or unusual motion; but however, since it is rather a fear of others than a bashful distrust of myself, I despaire of a perfect cure unless Nature as well as Human Governments could be civilised and brought into a methodical order."

This is putting our young lady's pretty weakness on a very high footing, and we admire to see that all the economy of nature is to be changed in order to cure her of her natural defect, "if defect it be," and not rather a proof of the nobleness which cannot endure "fools or unworthy persons." Her pale reserve and speechlessness before the hard Parliamentary Court, which looked upon her youth unmoved, and refused her any dower out of her husband's lands because he had been a delinquent before she married him, is thus doubly accounted for. Not blushing, but her spirits contracted to a chill paleness, though her heart was burning within her, she withdrew once and for ever from the harsh tribunal.

The expedition, which bore so little immediate fruit, was not, however, quickly despatched. The law's delays were not altogether superseded by the energetic action of the dominant party, and my Lady Newcastle had to wait and watch the progress of the sale of her husband's lands, though she got nothing by it; while her brother-in-law's still more important business was carried on slowly. They had started with scarcely funds enough to bring them to England. Their money ran out when they arrived at Southwark, where, it is curious to hear, they were stayed, and could not get further, till Sir Charles had sent for an old steward, who, being able to do nothing for him by his own credit,

pawned his master's watch, which paid their score, and enabled them to proceed to London ! There, while Sir Charles compounded for and secured the possession of such princely houses as Bolsover and Welbeck, they would in the meantime have starved had not some small loans been got, "not without great difficulty." "My Lord's two Sons (who were also in England) were no less in want and necessity than we, having nothing but bare Credit to live upon;" while my lord himself, in Antwerp, was in far greater distress, tormented by his creditors, "having run upon the score so long without paying any the least part thereof." A more doleful position could not be; and one wonders that anything was left, after the satisfaction of all these claims, when at last they did come to their own. The business lingered on; and in all, Lady Newcastle was a year and a half in England. Her family seemed to have tried to draw her into such diversion as was possible, to cheer her troubled spirits. But this could be but little; and her own favourite occupations of literature were her resource. This little episode, however, tells for a great deal in the simple record of her life: it was the only glimpse of life she had known,—the only variety from that curious existence in the high-gabled house at Antwerp, where the young Marchioness lived a life half-way between that of a princess and a pauper. In London she had at least a family and friends to fall back upon.

"I paid some half-score visits," she says, "and went with my Lord's brother to hear Musick in one Mr Lawes his house, three or four times, as also some three or four times to Hide Park with my sisters, to take the air; else I never stirred out of my lodgings, unless to see my Brothers and Sisters; nor seldom did I dress myself or take pleasure to adorn myself, since he

I onely desired to please was absent, although report did dress me in a hundred several fashions. 'Tis true, when I did dress myself, I did endeavour to do it to my best becoming, both in respect to myself and those I went to visit or chanc'd to meet. But after I had been in England a year and a half, part of which I writ a book of Poems, and a little Book called my 'Philosophical Fancies,' to which I have writ a large addition since I returned out of England, besides this one book and one other. As for my book entitled 'The World's Olio,' I writ most part of it before I went into England; but being not of a merry, although not of a froward or peevish disposition, became very melancholy, by reason I was from my Lord, which made my mind so restless as it did break my sleeps and distemper my health, with which, growing impatient of a longer delay, I resolved to return."

When my Lady Newcastle returned to Antwerp, the creditors naturally supposed that she had accomplished her mission, and that they were likely to receive some portion at least of their advances, which produced another crisis; "but when my Lord informed them of the truth of the business, and desired their patience somewhat longer, with assurance that as soon as he received any money he would honestly and justly satisfy them," these excellent men not only consented to a further exercise of patience, but gave him further and further credit, and life went on under the same conditions as before. "This was the only happiness my Lord had in his distressed condition," the lady says. Notwithstanding the apparent ruin of the family, and the small appearance of recovering his own, credit and kindness never failed him; and although he was banished his native country, and dispossessed from his own estate, "he could nevertheless live in so much Splendour and Gran-

deur." Something no doubt was owing to the persuasive gifts and graces of the princely Cavalier; but it is at the same time a wonderful proof of the certainty of these astute observers over the seas that Cromwell's extraordinary personal rule was like every other despotism, however sublime a thing, dependent upon one man's life, and certain to give way to the course of nature sooner or later. We doubt much whether any of the courtiers at St Germain's in a later age found French *négociants* or Dutch bankers equally serviceable.

Thus for several years further the strange foreign existence went on. When "his Majesty (our now gracious King Charles the Second) passed through Antwerp, . . . after my Lord had done his humble Duty and waited on His Majesty, he was pleased to Honour him with his Presence at his House. The same did almost all strangers that were persons of Quality," adds Lady Newcastle. "If they made any stay in the Town, they would come and visit my Lord, and see the Mannage of his Horses." One day my lady counted "about seventeen Coaches, in which were all Persons of Quality," in the train of Don John of Austria, come for this purpose, "to show their respect and civility," for whom "my Lord rode some of his Horses himself," a singular gratification to the spectators. Don John himself showed great consideration for the noble emigrant, asking him if he had any fault to find with his surroundings—a backing up which no doubt told greatly upon the minds of the liberal burghers of Antwerp. "Nor was this the only honour" received from Royalty; for when King Charles and his brother and sister were again in Antwerp, they accepted "a small Entertainment at his House," and on another occasion a private

dinner, of which his gracious Majesty was pleased "merrily and in jest to tell me that he perceived my Lord's credit could procure better meat than his own." Extraordinary borrowed existence! what could be more strange than this course going on year after year, in which one does not know which most to admire—the faith and confidence of the lenders, or the equanimity of the borrowers? "These passages I mention," his historian says, "only to declare my Lord's happiness in his miseries." And indeed he seems to have suffered wonderfully little, so far as can be judged; though his anxious brother, Sir Charles, declared of himself that "his meat never did him good, by reason that my Lord was always so near wanting that he was never sure after one meal to have another;" and his still more anxious wife, though never "afraid of starving or begging," was in constant alarm "lest my Lord for his debts should suffer imprisonment, when sadness of mind, and want of air and exercise, would have wrought his destruction." All these dangers, however, were happily averted from this wonderful Hero-Idol, the head of the house, from whom all its members seem to have found it their highest duty to ward off trouble, and whose convenience was always the chief thing studied. The good Sir Charles never came back from England, but died shortly after his sister-in-law left him there, leaving some little money, with which my Lord "sprinkled something among his creditors," and had once more a little in hand to send to market with, which "avoided cozenage," and made in a little time wonderful economies.

As for my lady, though doubtless it was necessary for her, notwithstanding her bashfulness, to receive the noble visitors who were

so frequent, it was her pleasure to live a retired and quiet life. She had been, she tells us, from her childhood, addicted "to contemplation rather than conversation, to solitariness rather than society, to melancholy rather than mirth, to write with her pen rather than work with the needle."

"Being of a lazy nature, and not of an active disposition as some are that love to journey from town to town, from place to place, from house to house, delighting in variety of company, making still one where the greatest number is; likewise in playing at Cards or any other Games, in which I neither have practised nor have I any skill therein: as for Dancing, although it be a graceful art, and becometh unmarried Persons well, yet for those that are married it is too light an action, disagreeing with the gravity thereof; and for Revelling, I am of too dull a nature to make one in a merry society: as for Feasting, it would neither agree with my humour or constitution, for my diet is for the most part sparing, as a little boiled chicken or the like, my drink mostly water; for though I have an indifferent good appetite, yet I do often fast, out of an opinion that if I should eat much, and exercise little, which I do, onely walking a slow pace in my chamber, whilst my thoughts run apace in my brain, so that the motions of my minde hinders the active exercise of my body; for should I Dance or Run, or walk apace, I should dance my Thoughts out of Measure, Run my Fancies out of Breath, and tread out the Feet of my Numbers. But because I would not bring myself quite out of sight of the world, I go sometimes abroad, seldome to visit, but only in my Coach about the Town, or about some of the streets, which we call here a Tour, when all the chief of the Town go to see and be seen, likewise all strangers of what quality soever, as all great Princes or Queens that make any short stay: for this town being a passage or thoroughfare to most parts, causeth many times persons of great quality to be here, though not as inhabitants, yet to lodge for some short time; and all such as I said

take a delight, or at least goe to see the custome thereof, which most Cities of Note in Europe, for all I can hear, hath such like recreations for the Effeminate Sex, although for my part I had rather sit at home, and write or walk, as I said, in my chamber and contemplate. But I hold it necessary sometimes to appear abroad: besides I do find that severall objects do bring new materials for my thoughts and fancies to build upon; yet I must say this in behalf of my thoughts, that I never found them idle—for if the senses brings no work in, they will work of themselves like silkworms that spinns out of their own bowels. Neither can I say I think the time tedious when I am alone, so I be near my-Lord and know he is well."

This somewhat complicated and difficult piece of writing—for her ladyship writes in one long, much-divided sentence, and will not pause to take breath or begin a new one for pages together—reveals to us such a pretty, fantastic, quaint existence, with so much buzzing of fond imaginations, which the gentle recluse takes for thoughts, and such a tender loyal heart withal in the midst of them, that the reader will be hard-hearted, we think, who is not touched by a friendly pleasure in making this great lady's acquaintance. To think of my lord going out to his "Mannage," witching all these persons of quality with his noble horsemanship, seventeen coaches full of them; and my lady above—in some large-windowed chamber where Helena Forman, perhaps, once sat to Rubens with all her plump roses relieved against the wainscot—sitting at home to write, or pacing about slowly over the polished floor whilst "my thoughts run apace in my brain," and all sorts of quaint and strange philosophies, and scraps of conceit in verse, circle and float through her mind,—is to establish a new association with the wealthy old Flemish town where they were received so

kindly. Her Grace allows that she was fanciful in dress. "I took great pleasure in attiring, fine dressing and fashions," she says, "especially such fashions as I did invent myself, not taking that pleasure in such fashions as was invented by others. Also I did dislike that any should follow my Fashions, for I always took delight in a singularity, even in accoutrements of habits; but whatsoever I was addicted to, either in fashion of Cloaths, contemplation of thoughts, actions of life, they were Lawful, Honest, Honourable, and Modest." No doubt the Flemish ladies kept watch over all the new varieties of toilet in which she appeared as she made her tour through the lively streets. Never was there a more complete Blue-stocking, a more thorough *Précieuse*, and yet the most delightful acquaintance, the truest wife, the tenderest friend!

But at last, after so long a waiting—after all those troubles with the creditors, and commercial crises, and vague terrors of not knowing where the next meal was to come from—triumph came. The Marquis, too impatient to wait for any arrangement of his affairs, left his wife behind to do this for him, and set out at once for England.

"My Lord (who was so transported with joy of returning to his native country that he regarded not the vessel) having set sail from Rotterdam, was so becalmed that he was six days and six nights upon the water, during which time he pleased himself with mirth, and passed his time away as well as he could: provisions he wanted not, having them in great store and plenty. At last being come so far that he was able to discern the smoque of London, which he had not seen in a long time, he merrily was pleased to desire one that was near him to jogg and awake him out of his dream, 'For surely,' said he, 'I have been sixteen years asleep and am not thoroughly awakened yet.' My Lord

lay that night at Greenwich, where his supper seemed more savoury to him than any meat he had hitherto tasted; and the noise of some scraping fiddlers he thought the pleasantest harmony he had ever heard."

Lady Newcastle remained behind. Her husband had gone to Holland to congratulate the restored King, and set out from Rotterdam, so that she could scarcely have joined him in any case; and she had now his commands "to stay in that city as a pawn for his debts, until he could compass money to discharge them." That he should have been able to do so, with apparently no very great delay, is wonderful. "My Lord's affection to me," the historian adds, "was such that it made him very industrious in providing those means." The magistrates of the city came to take leave of her when, after all the claims of the creditors were settled, she prepared to set out on her journey. Notwithstanding all these years' residence, she had to make use of an interpreter to convey her parting civilities to these courteous officials; for she had, as she tells us in another place, "a natural stupidity towards the learning of any other language than my native tongue." But after all the joy and all the anticipations, it does not seem that the first experiences of the noble pair in London were very satisfactory. On her arrival she found my lord in lodgings which, if not to be called unhandsome, were yet not fit for a person of his rank and quality; neither were his circumstances such as were satisfactory to his wife. "Whereupon, out of some passion," she cries, stung by this disappointment after so many years of expectation, "I desired him to leave the town and retire into the Country;" but "my Lord gently reproved me for my rashness and impatience." He

seems to have kept his equanimity in the midst of this disappointment, as he had kept it through all his previous trials. The Marquis's Flemish creditors had been paid somehow: but he for whom his followers had suffered themselves to be despoiled, had no intention, and probably small means, of paying his royal debts. My Lord of Newcastle did not long waste his time and temper hanging about Court. He retired with dignity on such remnants of his estate as his brother had redeemed. It did not become so great a personage to clamour like a beggar, or to ask for thanks that were not voluntarily paid.

“My lord before he began his Journey went to his gracious Sovereign, and begg'd leave that he might retire into the Country to redeem and settle, if possible, his confused, entangled, and almost ruin'd estate. ‘Sir,’ said he to his Majesty, ‘I am not ignorant that many believe I am discontented; and ’tis probable they’ll say I retire through discontent. But I take God to witness, that I am in no kind or way displeased; for I am so joy’d at your Majesties happy Restoration, that I cannot be sad or troubled for any concern to my own particular: but whatsoever your Majesty is pleased to command me, were it to sacrifice my life, I shall most obediently perform it, for I have no other will but your Majesties pleasure.’ Thus he kissed his Majestys hand, and went next day into Nottingham, to his manor-house called Welbeck.”

He had been sixteen years in banishment. Of his estates, some had been sold, as we have seen; and of those that remained, the houses were falling into ruin, the woods cut down, the farms unlet, havoc and destruction everywhere. He got the title of duke with a patent full of flattery, recounting the great proofs of his “Wisdom and Piety,” which had been “sufficiently known to us from our younger years,” but little or noth-

ing more: and had to pick himself up and rebuild his houses, and struggle out of poverty as he best could. The Duchess occupies many pages of her volume with an account of the possessions which he had lost, and the list is a large one. Perhaps there was some compensation to the Duke's active mind and magnificent tastes in the fact that new buildings were required, and an entire system of new arrangement. He got money somehow to do what was necessary, which is an unceasing wonder—but so it was; and probably the rebuilding of his country-houses was a less costly pleasure than living in town in the discharge of some great office; and their retirement was made with dignity without waiting for anything like dismissal. But it would not seem that their transfer to Bolsover was so great an advance upon the life at Antwerp as they hoped. The two noble fanciful figures disappear from our sight in this new scene; and we have nothing left but a record of vexation and disappointment, lost lands, and hopes given over. We cease to see my lord and my lady as we have seen them so long, in all the detail of their daily life—in their cares and pleasures, and the wonderful tranquillity with which each followed his and her particular phantasy—content enough notwithstanding all the creditors. They vanish from our sight, these noble peers. His Majesty had been happily restored, and heaven, so to speak, come down to earth; and they as well as King Charles had more or less got their own. But every terrestrial paradise is disappointing; and the happiness attained did not come up to the expectation of it,—as indeed it rarely does—but this time with more than ordinary reason.

Other people, however, afford us pleasant glimpses of the stately pair. Six or seven years after

that blessed Restoration, Mr John Evelyn went to make his court to the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle at their house in Clerkenwell—a curious locality to find them in. “They received me with kindness,” he says, “and I was much pleased with the extraordinary fanciful habit, garb, and discourse of the Duchess.” A few days after he went to the house in Clerkenwell again with his wife, to whose mother the Duchess supposed herself to have been under obligations. It makes us aware once more of the tender and faithful heart of our Duchess Margaret—though the recipients of her kindness, it is evident, smiled at it—that she received Mrs Evelyn “in a kind of transport, suitable to her extravagant humour and dress, which was very singular.” Soon after, Evelyn was again “discoursing with the Duchess in her bedchamber;” and though he had a proper respect for a great title, he would not have lost his time, that fine and cultivated gentleman, if there had not been something in her which pleased the ingenious courtier. “To London” he records again, “to wait on the Duchess of Newcastle (who was a mighty pretender to learning, poetry, and philosophy, and had in both published divers books) to the Royal Society, whither she came in great pomp; and being received by our Lord President at the door of our meeting-house, the mace, &c., carried before him, had several experiments shown to her.” Thus we find that if they had had losses, yet they had resumed a befitting place in society, and were not entirely secluded from the honours that were their due. Although Mr Evelyn had his gibe like other people, he wrote to her Grace the most beautiful letter when she sent him a present of her works, sending her his own book about forest-trees—not as a return, but as “an

expression of his gratitude.” “Nor, Madam,” he says, “is it by this that I intend to pay all my homage for that glorious presence which merits so many encomiums, or write a panegyric of your virtues which all the world admires, lest the indignity of my style should profane a thing so sacred; but to repeat my admiration of your genius and sublime wit, so comprehensive of the most abstracted appearances, and so admirable in your sex, or rather in your Grace’s person alone, which I never call to mind but to rank it amongst the heroines and constellate with the graces.” It was the more shame for Mr Evelyn, that most virtuous of courtiers, if he did not mean all the fine things he said. “Lucretia Marinella,” he says, “who wrote a book, *dell’ Eccellenzia delle Donne*, had no need to have assembled so many instances and arguments to adorn the work had she lived to be witness of Marguerite, Duchess of Newcastle, to have read her writings, and to have heard her discourse of the science she comprehended.”

It is still more interesting to find the Duke himself—the husband whom she had so much glorified—“my lord,” whom to be near made all things go well for her, and whose position in the narrative is rather that of a silent and much worshipped divinity than of a protecting and kind husband,—taking up her defence and standing forth to the world to meet all comers in defence of his lady’s genius and truth. When she was assailed by some captious critic, he came forth with “an epistle to justify the Lady Newcastle, and Truth against Falsehood: laying those false and malicious aspersions of her that she was not Authoress of her Books.”

“This ladie’s philosophy is excellent, and will be thought so hereafter,” the Duke writes; “and the truth is, that it was wholly and only wrought

out of her own brain, as there are many instances by the several sheets that she sent daily to be writ fair for the Press. As for her Poems, where is the exception to them? Marry, they misse sometimes in the numbers and in the rimes. It is well known by the copies that these faults lie most upon the corrector and printer. But put the case there might be some slips in that kinde: is all the book damned for it? No mercy, gentlemen! When for the numbers every schoolboy can make them on his fingers, and for the rimes, Fenner would have put down Ben Johnson (*sic*), and yet neither the boy nor Fenner so good poets. No; it is neither of those either makes or condemns a poet: it is new-born and creating phansies that glorifies a poet; and in her book of poems I am sure there is excellent and new phansies as have not been writ by any, and that it was only writ by her is the greatest truth in the world. . . . Truly I cannot believe so unworthily of any scholar (honouring them so much as we both do) that they should envie this lady, or should have so much malice or emulation to cast such false aspersions on her, that she did not write those books that go forth in her name. They will hardly find out who else writ them: and I protest none ever writ them but herself. Here's the crime, a lady writes them; and to intrench so much upon the male prerogative is not to be forgiven. I had not troubled you with this but that a learned doctor, our very noble friend, writ us word of the infidelity of some people in this kinde. Whatsoever I have writ is absolutely true, which I here (as a man of honour) set my hand to.

W. NEWCASTLE."

It is pleasant to see the old Duke roused out of his old age, out of his house-building and country-gentleman occupations, to set lance in rest for the vindication of his lady and her honour,—all the more since he had not scorned to use the pen himself in his day, having been the author of a fine treatise on Horsemanship, his favourite subject, and also of various plays and poetries: for we must not forget that Clarendon describes him specially as

"amorous of poetry and musick." Indeed, in this point as in all others, his wife yields the palm to my lord. "He recreates himself with his pen, writing what his wit dictates to him," she says; "but I pass my time rather with scribbling than with writing." And the conversation of this much-admired husband, she tells us, was so remarkable, that Mr Hobbes, the great philosopher, was pleased more than once to make use of his observations "in one of his books called *Leviathan*;" whereas for herself, she cared little to talk "unless I am with my lord, yet then I rather listen attentively to what he says than impertinently speak." Thus it was a man well qualified to judge who maintained the gentle historian's cause. Horace Walpole, who places them both among his Royal and Noble Authors, thinks proper to treat this stately pair as a couple of antiquated scribblers, rather ridiculous than interesting; but we trust the reader will be of a different opinion.

We have not half exhausted the rambling but delightful description which Lady Newcastle gives of herself; but we trust we have said enough to make her shy and fanciful figure, and the whimsical disposition which was conjoined with so true a heart, visible out of the mists to here and there a new acquaintance. A perpetual afflatus and gentle breath of inspiration seems to have kept her not too well-balanced imagination always agog. "That little wit I have, it delights me to scribble it out, and disperse it about," she says; and she frankly avows herself to be ambitious, though "'tis neither for Beauty, Wit, Titles, Wealth, or Power, but as they are steps to raise me to Fame's Tower, which is to live by remembrance in after ages." We know no defence of this visionary ambition more ingenious than the following:—

"I repine not at the gifts that Nature or Fortune bestows upon others, yet I am a great Emulator; for though I wish none worse than they are, yet it is lawful for me to wish myself the best, and to do my honest endeavour thereto; for I think it no crime to wish myself the exactest of nature's works, my thread of life the longest, my Chain of Destinie the strongest, my mind the peacablest; my life the pleasantest, my death the easiest, and the greatest Saint in heaven; also to do my endeavour so far as honour and honesty doth allow of, to be the highest on Fortune's Wheele, and to hold the Wheele from turning if I can; and if it be commendable to wish another's good, it were a sin not to wish my own."

Alas! all the scribblings and musings—the philosophy of which the Duke bears witness that "it is excellent, and will be thought so hereafter"—the poems that are full of "excellent and new phansies"—the "sad fained Stories or serious humours or melancholy passions," of which she speaks,—have long died out of human memory. She wrote many plays, of a confused and chaotic character, in her latter days, in addition to all the previous olios and miscellanies; but only antiquaries know anything about the rare and dusty volumes in which these works are contained. Nothing has lasted but the delightful study of herself and history of her husband, which we have endeavoured to set before the reader. We are afraid the few scattered verses which are to be found in various old collections are not worth the quoting. Here is one, however, an Epistle to her "Braine," which is more characteristic at least than the prettyish rhymes about Queen Mab, which generally represent her name:—

"I wonder, braine, thou art so dull, when
there
Was not a day but wit passed through
the yeare.
For seven years 'tis since I have married
bin,
Which time my braine might be a maga-
zine

To stow up wise discourse naturally sent
In fluent words, which free and easy went.
If thou art not with wit enriched thereby,
Then uselesse is the art of memory;
But thou, poor braine, hard frozen art
with cold,—
Words, scales of wit, will neither print
nor hold."

We will conclude with her own account of her reason for composing her autobiography:—

"I hope my readers will not think me vain for writing my life, since there have been many that have done the like, as *Cæsar*, *Ovid*, and many more, both men and women, and I know no reason I may not do it as well as they; but I verily believe some censuring Readers will scornfully say, Why hath this Lady writ her own life? since no one cares to hear whose daughter she was, or whose wife she is, or how she lived, or what humour or disposition she was of. I answer that it is true that it is to no purpose to the Readers, but it is to the author-ess, because I wish it for my own sake, not theirs; neither did I intend this piece for to delight but divulge,—not to please the fancy, but to tell the truth, lest after ages should mistake in not knowing I was daughter to one Master Lucas of St John's, near Colchester, Essex, second wife to the Lord Marquess of Newcastle—for my Lord having two wives, I might easily have been mistaken, especially if I should die, and my Lord marry again."

This quaint reason for writing a book seems as humble as the comparison of herself to *Cæsar* and *Ovid* is ambitious: but at least she has succeeded in guarding against any confusion on this subject. In literature there is but one Duchess of Newcastle. She died before her lord, but he followed her speedily, and did not marry again, as she seems to have thought possible. And it was he who inscribed upon her tomb the noble and often-quoted epitaph, where her family is celebrated to all ages as one in which "all the sons were brave and all the daughters virtuous."

MR GLADSTONE'S ELEVENTH BUDGET.

MR GLADSTONE is usually seen at his best in a Budget-speech,—when unfolding for the year, or it may be for a sequence of years, his schemes of State finance and taxation. Besides his unrivalled power of lucid financial exposition, and as an indispensable basis of that rhetorical skill, he possesses an invaluable aptitude for details, which gives him a thorough mastery of his subject, enabling him to discern the full bearings and consequences of any financial changes, and also, be it said, to gloss them with the aspect in which he wishes them to be viewed by Parliament. As Lord Beaconsfield once said, “Upon a perfect knowledge and right appreciation of details, the settlement of great questions mainly depends.” It is truly the most indispensable requisite for successful statesmanship, as Napoleon long ago said it was for successful generalship; and it is peculiarly welcome in financial schemes, which are not readily apprehended either by the House of Commons or by the public at large. The present, as he himself reminded the House, is Mr Gladstone's eleventh Budget, and “probably his last.” If this forecast merely implied a change of Ministry, and the consequent exclusion of Mr Gladstone from Budget-making (and ministerial mischiefs-making in general), we certainly could not view its realisation with regret.

But the event which, as we write, is saddening the whole nation, reminds one painfully how Death has been thinning and levelling the ranks of British statesmanship. The great statesman who has just died “calmly, as in sleep,” full of years and of peerless fame and honours, leaves a gap in the

State which no number of other men can fill; and we may well prize such leaders as are left, because no other stars like those bright ones which are gone are visible above the present horizon.

We need such men. A year or two before his death, Lord Brougham—who, strangely enough, had never visited the House of Commons after he was raised to the peerage—felt a desire to look once more upon the House which had been the scene of his youthful ambition and greatest triumphs; and, leaning upon the arm of a friend, the veteran of so many parliamentary campaigns, the brilliant and fiery fighter in the stormy warfare of the first Reform Bill, entering by the passage from the House of Lords, gazed once more, and unobserved, upon the House where the representatives of the British Commons were assembled. Where were Palmerston, the elder Stanley, Russell, O'Connell, and other giants of the olden combats? Even the front benches were filled with strange faces, or at best with men who had been the striplings of Brougham's time; while all beyond was a sea of unknown faces, which were all nobodies to him. “Take me away! Take me away!” gasped Lord Brougham; and with a pang—and a very sad one too—the veteran statesman retraced his steps to the Upper House. Since then, household suffrage has been doing its levelling work; and among the later breed of M.P.s there are not a few whom the author of the first Reform Bill would have shrunk from, and who, whether in character or in political capacity, are poor substitutes for their predecessors, the men who made the House of Commons the model of representative

assemblies, and whose patriotism, sagacity, and resolution placed England and her empire at the head of the world. We need such men to carry down the high traditions of the House. But being profoundly opposed to Mr Gladstone in politics—nay, even apprehending that he will rank in history as the first down-puller of the British empire—we cannot affect to regret, should his ministerial rule cease with the present year, and this his eleventh Budget be also his last.

But there is not a single feature in the present Budget which bears the aspect of its being the concluding Budget, either of a series, or of an illustrious financial career. Its whole character is of a different complexion, and suggests a different issue. It is the duty of every man who has work to do (hard though the task often be) to shut his eyes against failing strength or the omens of not distant death, and to live and act as if immortal,—doing his day's work unfalteringly to the end: and so, it is in no unrespectful spirit (very much the opposite!) that we venture to think that at this very moment Mr Gladstone is already scanning the ground as it will stand a year hence, and thoughtfully measuring the foundations for another great Budget which will be deposited during the current year. At first sight, it is true—and so indeed it may be generally accepted—the Budget is of an unambitious, safe, and simple character; a quiet and sensible measure for meeting the financial wants of the year,—like the Budgets of the late Sir G. Cornwall Lewis, which nevertheless were better liked in the City and on 'Change than the brilliantly ingenious Budgets by which Mr Gladstone has made his fame. On the other hand, the thought arises, "Why should Mr Gladstone want so much money?" Were his object simply to meet the requirements of

the current year, surely his ingenuity would not have failed to discover a means of doing so without maintaining so large a body of taxation, of which no small portion is new and imposed by himself. For example, if it were merely a difficulty of the year that had to be met, is there not the Sinking Fund, which Mr Gladstone has so fiercely (and, as we hold, foolishly) condemned? We cannot help thinking that if he had merely wished to square the accounts of the year, Mr Gladstone would have come down with vehement vituperation upon Sir Stafford Northcote's Sinking Fund, and would have ruthlessly appropriated its savings to his own temporary purpose. Last year, he had a penny of Income-tax, yielding £1,420,000, and £640,000 of augmented Probate duties, in excess of the revenue received in the previous year by the Conservative Government. This year, although the sixth penny of Income-tax is struck off again, Mr Gladstone keeps the £640,000 of increase from the Probate duties; he makes another change in these "death duties" which will further increase them by £350,000; by "equalising" the tax on foreign spirits, he increases it by a sum of £180,000; and in addition to all this, now that the Malt drawback has been paid and the Beer-tax is in full play, he will get, according to his own reckoning, from this source £400,000 more than the State used to get from the "abolished" Malt-tax. Why all these new charges, or *additions* to the taxation? And not one of them is of a transient character. Last year's extra penny on the Income-tax was voted (otherwise it would not have been voted at all) specially and solely to cover an important financial change or commutation which would be completed within the year; and so, as a matter of course and of express engagement, it has been

struck off again. "*Vix ea nostra* voco," as Mr Gladstone said. But has he said the same of any of the other above-mentioned additions to the taxation of the country? Or can any one fancy that the million sterling or thereabout (£640,000 a year ago, and £390,000 now), added to the Legacy and Probate duties—or the £180,000 added to the duties on "foreign" (really upon colonial) spirits—or the £400,000 by which the receipts from the new Beer-tax will exceed the amount of the Malt-tax,—will be struck off at the end of the present year? Are they not, plainly, meant to remain in force as permanent additions to the taxation?

What inference, then, can be drawn from these (very striking and important) facts but this,—either that Mr Gladstone, for no definite object yet explained, is resolved to add heavily to the permanent taxation of the country; or else that, by establishing this large addition to the permanent taxation, he is preparing such a future surplus as will enable him to achieve another great Budget, such as (as from his opportunities he may well do) will equal or eclipse in brilliance or magnitude of change the most famous of his former Budgets? He is creating a surplus, by greatly increasing the ordinary taxes, in order that a year hence he may be able to cut and carve the revenue pretty much as he likes. Whether the wisdom or benefit of this future Budget will be commensurate with the magnitude of its fiscal changes, or whether it will be good for the country at all, remains to be seen. But certainly Mr Gladstone is paving the way for another of his great Budgets, and will next year have at his disposal opportunities or resources of such magnitude as may be perilous in the hands of so unsafe and adventurous a politician. Indeed, in this additional taxation

may not the Prime Minister be preparing some bolstering up of the national Exchequer to meet the demands to be so largely created against it by the new Irish Land Bill? In the case of any other statesman we should scout such a conjecture; but Mr Gladstone is so mightily ingenious that the public are never safe against his surprises.

Taken by itself, we repeat, the Budget is commonplace enough, and not unsatisfactory to the general public; and it has been fairly received in the purely financial circles of "the City." But to the Liberal party, as is freely stated by its leading journals, the Budget is bitterly disappointing. How are we to account for this curious state of public feeling? How is it that a Budget which is fairly satisfactory in itself, and is generally received as such, should find its bitterest detractors among the Liberal majority which (suddenly and somewhat unaccountably, it is true) placed Mr Gladstone once more in power? The explanation is simply this, that the Budget, and the policy which has given birth to it, totally belie the pledges given and the principles so blatantly announced by Mr Gladstone during his electioneering campaign, or in what he has since chosen to treat as "irresponsible utterances." Never before, in our time at least, has Nemesis so visibly hovered over the heads and fortunes of any Ministry. "Curses, like chickens," says the proverb, "come home to roost;" and so it has fared with the damnatory denunciations which Mr Gladstone, in his furious electioneering speeches, hurled against the Conservative Government, and, most of all, against his great and patriotic rival, Lord Beaconsfield. Two years ago, Mr Gladstone publicly acknowledged that it had become the great object of his life to thwart Lord Beacons-

field. For the sake of this purely, or at least chiefly, personal object—in which, even were it unconsciously to Mr Gladstone, the mean spirit of envy predominated—patriotism (never strong in Mr Gladstone) was given to the winds, and calumnious misrepresentation was directed against every part of the Beaconsfield policy. By a sudden awakening of his conscience, the annexation of the Transvaal, which had been approved as much by Liberals as by Conservatives, was denounced by Mr Gladstone as unjust and immoral (Mr Gladstone is nothing if not “moral”). Next, to disparage his great rival’s triumph at the Congress of Berlin, and the “peace with honour,” for which our people were so enthusiastically grateful, Mr Gladstone sought to excite public hatred against Austria, one of the allies by whose aid Lord Beaconsfield had compelled Russia to give up her ill-gotten Turkish spoils; while the peace was sneered at, or indeed fiercely denounced as inadequate and unjust; and Mr Gladstone vaunted that, if placed in power, he would lead Europe to a very different and altogether moral and satisfactory settlement of the Eastern Question. Then, as to Ireland. How vehemently did Mr Gladstone denounce the Conservative Government for having recourse to coercion, and boasted that the mere fact of the Liberals being in power would pacify the rebellious section in Ireland by the knowledge that Liberalism, morality, and justice ever go hand in hand! It were beyond our present purpose to show what became of all these calumnies and misleading expectations. Our readers know how the Peace Preservation Act was allowed to expire, despite all the remonstrances of Mr Forster, who quickly, and sadly for himself, came to see the true state of matters in Ireland; how the Land League

grew and established a tyranny of its own, and a general reign of terrorism and defiance both of law and Government; and how arms and ammunition were brought into Ireland abundantly, so that in counties where hardly an old fowling-piece existed a year ago, almost every man and boy is now armed with rifle or revolver, or with both. “Stick to your rent, and buy arms,” said the League; and as the Arms Act was at an end, the peasantry obeyed the order, and are now armed universally. And so at last, despite the demonstration against their ministerial colleagues by Messrs Bright and Chamberlain, and the angry cry of the Quaker that “force is no remedy”—echoed as it was by the Liberal newspapers—the reign of terrorism in Ireland became too intolerable, and Mr Forster’s facts, as well as his threats of resignation, were too potent to be ignored. And so, at the very opening of Parliament, Mr Gladstone had to claim “urgency,” with an unprecedented suspension of the freedom of debate, for a Coercion Bill and Arms Bill, which would not have been needed had he condescended to continue the protective measures of his predecessors. Instead of merely coercing the Irish agitators, Mr Gladstone applied coercion also to the House of Commons.

Of Mr Gladstone’s electioneering boasting and denunciations in regard to the Eastern Question, we can speak even more briefly. Compelled at the outset to apologise to the Austrian Government for his false vilification,—nay, forced to do this before either Germany or Austria (who had so powerfully supported Lord Beaconsfield in his triumph) would even negotiate with him or his Ministry,—Mr Gladstone nevertheless strove to disparage the triumph of his illustrious rival, and to claim public admiration for

his own "better way" of doing these things by his feeble and mischievous reopening of the Eastern Question, and by the miserable Dulcigno demonstration, in which he was snubbed as soon as he would fain have engaged in open hostilities against Turkey! But his mischief-making policy of so-called "high morality"—again for the purpose of discrediting Lord Beaconsfield's triumph at the Congress of Berlin—was not exhausted; and he directly encouraged the Greeks in their unfounded claims to despoil our old ally Turkey. And so the perilous Eastern Question has been kept open—after being settled; and, even now, when Mr Gladstone seems to have repented of his rashness, or at least has been compelled by the other European Powers to cease from backing up Greece in her preposterous claims, the evil which he did can hardly be undone, and the peace of Europe is still rendered insecure by a pretentious little kingdom which trades and hucksters upon the known repugnance of the European Powers to a reopening of war, which may lead to bloody and most disastrous convulsions.

Lastly, and most painfully and wofully of all to our people and to our empire, Nemesis takes vengeance upon the Ministry not only for the "irresponsible" wrongdoing of its chief before he took office, but for the miserable vacillation of its policy and frightful misconduct alike of the war and of the negotiations connected with the rebellion of the Boers. Having suddenly, and to damage the Conservative Government, denounced as "immoral" the annexation of the Transvaal, Mr Gladstone, when he came into office, nevertheless continued to uphold it as a just and proper act. The greater part of our troops, too, were withdrawn from the Cape. And when, seiz-

ing the opportunity, the Boers rose in armed rebellion against British rule, Mr Gladstone, in concert with his Cabinet (Mr Bright included), announced in the Queen's Speech at the beginning of the present year, that the rebellion must be put down, and the dignity of the British Crown reasserted. Orders were issued from Downing Street to put down the rebellion, and our handful of troops remaining at the Cape had to commence the campaign with such inadequacy of numbers that the British arms were subjected to a series of humiliating defeats. Thus, apart from all the other serious and most culpable blundering, the campaign was so grossly misconducted by this miserable Ministry of ours as to insure defeat and humiliation and a heavy loss of life, sacrificed by the lamentable incompetency of the Ministry in the conduct of the war. And at last Mr Gladstone evoked the indignation of all England by capitulating to the demands of the Boers at Laing's Neck; while in the East "skedaddling" out of Candahar, and abandoning the splendid defensive frontier for our Indian empire, which had been so gallantly won by our soldiers. In Afghanistan, in short, as still more wofully at the Cape, there has been a waste of money, of brave men's lives, and of British honour and *prestige*,—as the sole outcome of the Gladstonian policy and ignoble blundering.

We might even apologise for speaking of those matters preliminary, and as if subordinate, to the Budget; for the temper of the British nation must have changed greatly if our people do not deplore the miserable policy of the Government alike in Ireland and abroad—most of all, the gross blundering (to call it by the mildest phrase) of the South African war—far more keenly and profoundly than any

faults or disappointments committed in a Budget. But all these things hang together; indeed, the extraordinary increase of the taxation under this Gladstonian Cabinet, would be unaccountable if no reference were made to its general policy. Part of last year's extra two millions of taxation has gone to wage the lamentably misconducted war with the Boers which Mr Gladstone himself proclaimed, and caused the Queen to proclaim, and which he has brought to a close by a shameful capitulation.

The Nemesis which besets and overhangs Mr Gladstone and his Ministry is shown as strikingly in the Budget as in the rest of their policy. Happily, however, there is no national humiliation here. It is only the honesty of the Ministry that suffers, and their credit in the eyes of their own party. We Conservatives have not come to the low level of a so-called "utilitarian" that grudges even an extra pound sterling of taxation, although it be required for the service of the State. But as against himself, and in the eyes of his deluded Liberal majority, Mr Gladstone's Budget is most damnatory. All his financial promises and pledges, by which he won the ready faith of the multitude, are here belied. *Here*, at least, there can be no equivocation. The question is one of plain figures—of taxation lessened or increased; and the figures speak for themselves.

In Mr Gladstone's Budget last year—not brought in hurriedly upon taking office, but after the amplest premeditation, for it was not introduced until the 10th of June—a penny was added to the Income-tax, and a large addition, in the form of a rearrangement, was made to the Probate duties,—together constituting an addition of upwards of two millions sterling to the previous burden of taxation. This was an odd beginning for a

Gladstonian Ministry. Mr Gladstone's last act of his former Administration had been to pledge himself to the entire abolition of the Income-tax. In February 1874 in his manifesto to the constituencies, on the eve of the general election, he announced that the time had come when the nation ought to be relieved of this objectionable impost; and he engaged, if the constituencies upheld him in office, that he would at once in that very year totally abolish it. As the constituencies refused this bribe, and ejected him from office, Mr Gladstone doubtless holds that he is relieved from that pledge; certainly he now ignores it as if it were one of his (now numerous!) "irresponsible utterances." But the fact remains, that in his first year of office Mr Gladstone added fully two millions to the taxation of the people; he officially pocketed two millions more than his "wickedly wasteful" predecessors had done, or had ever asked for. No doubt, according to Mr Gladstone's Budget estimate, £1,100,000 was destined simply to cover the Malt drawback; but even deducting this sum, Mr Gladstone raised the taxation a million in excess of what it had been under the Conservative Government. In justification of this, he pleaded, first, that he meant to abolish the Wine duties, which would cost for the year about £340,000; and secondly, that the Government contemplated making a gift to India: nevertheless, the Wine duties still remain untouched, and the year closed with merely the voting of a dribble, as first instalment, of the sum to be paid to India in connection with the past Afghan war.

For the present year the Budget belies Gladstonian promises quite as much as its predecessor. The Income-tax, of course, has been reduced from sixpence to fivepence,—

the extra penny of last year being struck off again. But there has been another (a second within twelve months) "rearrangement" of the Probate and Legacy duties, and also an "equalisation" of the surtax on foreign spirits. Now it is characteristic of Mr Gladstone, that whenever he sets himself to "rearrange," or "adjust," or "equalise," or in any way "improve the incidence" of a tax, the change always results in the people having to pay more than before! The Malt-tax has been "abolished," but the produce of malt, and the chief product of our barley-crop, is now made to pay nearly half a million more of taxation than before,—Mr Gladstone's own estimate being a permanent addition of £400,000 a-year to the revenue from this source. The "readjustment" of the "death duties" this year, which Mr Gladstone says will save poor people so much trouble, increases this impost to the extent of £390,000. The "equalisation" of the tax on foreign spirits ends just in the same way,—with the peculiarity that the extra sum thus imposed falls only on the produce of our own colonies. A small fiscal favour used to be shown to rum, as the produce of our West India colonies, which have suffered so vastly from changes in our legislation during the last half-century. And now this twopence a gallon in their favour is abolished, at the very time when the State bounties of France and other countries on beetroot-sugar are not only injuring our West India sugar-trade, but are gradually destroying the sugar-manufacture in the United Kingdom—as both Bristol and Greenock know to their cost, and as is bitterly and publicly complained of both by the employers and the employed in our home sugar-trade.

Thus, by two successive rearrangements, the "death duties"

have been increased by Mr Gladstone actually more than a million sterling: last year, to the extent of £700,000 (which Mr Gladstone says is a very moderate estimate of the addition, although it yielded only £640,000 in the past year), and this year to the extent, as estimated by Mr Gladstone, of £390,000. We hope that the poorer classes, who are to be "saved trouble" by this change, will duly appreciate Mr Gladstone's kind consideration of their case; but, so far as our knowledge goes, and as stands to reason, poor people are the least of all inclined to save themselves trouble by paying cash instead! The fact remains that the Probate and Legacy duties—or the "death duties," as Mr Gladstone styles them—are now heavier by upwards of a million than they were thirteen months ago, or indeed, up to the date of Mr Gladstone's Budget in June 1880.

In his Budget of last year, Mr Gladstone estimated the expenditure at £82,315,000; it proved to be £83,108,000. And this year Mr Gladstone estimates the expenditure at £84,804,000—or £1,700,000 larger than the Budget estimate of last year. Taking the whole facts of the case together, then, it is not in finance that Mr Gladstone's second Administration is distinguishing itself; and we can well understand the bitter disappointment of the Liberals with this eleventh Budget of their great chief. Last year, of course, it was easy for partisans to allege that Mr Gladstone could not be expected to do much in the first year of his Administration; but he did a good deal more than they liked, in increasing the taxes; while the nation at large do not find any compensation for the increase in his retreat from Candahar, or in his appalling misconduct of the war with the Boers. That war, he now says, was

a crime of "blood-guiltiness:" and so at least it was to *him*, who with his colleagues officially proclaimed that war,—who declared, too, in the Queen's Speech, that it was the bounden duty of the Government to put down the rebellion,—who ordered Sir George Colley to attack the rebels, and who sacrificed the life and honour of our brave soldiers in the recklessly conducted contest; yet who at last, shamefully beaten by the Boers, capitulates to the rebels, and tells our people that it was a case of blood-guiltiness from the beginning! And so it is—to Mr Gladstone! The war—nay, even the rebellion which occasioned it—was not in existence when Mr Gladstone took office. He himself proclaimed the war, no longer ago than the opening of Parliament. And now, shamefully defeated, he excuses his capitulation to the Boers by accusing his own Cabinet of the "crime of blood-guiltiness!"

But, it may be said, see how the National Debt has been reduced during the last twelve months. True; but what has Mr Gladstone had to do with that? One has only to glance at his own balance-sheets to see that the reduction of the debt has not been due to any surpluses of his—despite the increase of taxation—but to the Sinking Fund and financial conversions of the debt accomplished by his Conservative predecessor. As Mr Gladstone himself acknowledges: "The funded debt has been diminished by a million and a half; the unfunded debt has been much more largely diminished—viz., from £27,000,000 to £22,078,000—by the conversion which was made by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, and which he fully described at the time when he brought it before the House."

In conclusion, we have two remarks to make. One of these relates to the "abolition of the Malt-

tax." Our readers will remember what an uproar of triumph arose from the Liberals when Mr Gladstone announced that he would "abolish the Malt-tax." Strange that the Liberals should hail such a procedure; but they had no fear that their old enemies the farmers were going to be benefited,—feeling at once that it was some clever manœuvre of their great financial juggler. And so they shouted as if they had won a battle! The general public were vastly surprised that a statesman who had been foremost in upholding this tax, and who bitterly assailed Mr Disraeli when he proposed in 1851 to reduce the tax by one-half, should now claim the honour of abolishing it altogether. No one doubts that, had the late Conservative Ministry proposed to lighten the Malt-tax in the slightest degree, Mr Gladstone would have "flown at their throat"—that, however senselessly, the old cry of "Protection!" would have been raised; and the masses would have been told, in the most vehement terms which Mr Gladstone can command, that the Tories were at their old work of bolstering up the landed interest at the expense of the community at large. Indeed, what happened when the Conservative Government, acting upon the report of a Parliamentary Committee, introduced the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill? Although the precautionary regulations in that Bill (highly irksome as these are to our own farmers) tended directly to increase the supply of animal food for our people, the Liberal party fiercely opposed its most valuable clauses, and created so much misapprehension of the Bill among the masses of the population that the Government had to give way upon several points, with the result of depriving the measure of the efficiency which at first characterised it. The con-

duct of the Liberals in regard to that Bill sufficiently explains why it was that the late Conservative Government did not do more for the agricultural interest. It has been a prime object in the tactics of the Liberal party to prevent the Conservatives from doing anything for the agricultural interest, although that is still the most important branch of the national industry. The agricultural classes were essentially Conservative, while the strength of "Liberalism" has lain in the urban constituencies. Hence the Liberal leaders have fostered the notion that the interests of the two classes are distinctly antagonistic: they have imbued the masses with the belief that any measure which is beneficial for the farmers must be injurious to the "consumers." Thus, by opposing all measures beneficial for the agricultural classes, the Liberals have strengthened their own hold upon the urban constituencies, which have a great preponderance in voting power, while at the same time preventing the Conservatives from strengthening their hold upon the county constituencies.

Mr Gladstone is not troubled by scruples—least of all in favour of political consistency. Indeed he has been almost ceaselessly turning his back upon himself for the last thirty years. When replaced in office last year, he resolved upon a political *coup*. Having prevented the Conservative Government from doing much for the agricultural interest, whereby the Conservative cause was weakened in the counties, Mr Gladstone resolved to "dish the Tories" in their old stronghold by an "abolition" of the Malt-tax. It mattered nothing to him that he, more than any other statesman, had inveterately thwarted every attempt on the part of the Conservatives to abolish, or even

reduce, that tax—the thorough badness of which he himself now elaborately sets forth! Nay, more, the conversion of the Malt-tax into a Beer-tax has been proposed again and again during the last thirty years, and was always opposed by Mr Gladstone. Indeed, only in the present year, Mr Chaplin had introduced a Bill precisely for this purpose, yet could not obtain a hearing for it. Yet now Mr Gladstone takes vast credit for doing what he had so bitterly opposed in others. But there are two ways of doing a thing—a sham and an honest performance. And if Mr Gladstone's "abolition" of the Malt-tax be intelligently examined—and, also, as its practical results will soon show—the measure is as different as can well be conceived from what a Conservative abolition of the tax would be, and will prove as disappointing to the farmers as is the eating of "Dead Sea apples"—the core of which is ashes, albeit the skin is fair and tempting to the eye.

Now, what does Mr Gladstone's "abolition of the Malt-tax" amount to? The first and not least important point to be noticed is, that whatever may be abolished, it is not the heavy taxation imposed upon the produce of the barley-crop. On the contrary, this taxation, according to Mr Gladstone, will henceforth be £400,000 a-year larger than ever,—and the brewers maintain that the sum will be still larger. Anyhow, there is no question that the taxation upon the produce of the barley-crop will be increased to the amount of £400,000. This, indeed, was Mr Gladstone's chief plea for being allowed to add a penny to the Income-tax last year. "Give me this extra penny for a single year, and I will give you £400,000 as a permanent addition to the revenue." Well, then, where is the *gain*

from this so-called act of abolition, and who gets it? The gain, such as it is, goes solely to the maltsters and brewers, and not in the least either to the barley-growers or beer-sellers. It lightens the cost of manufacturing malt and beer, by lessening the amount of capital with which that manufacture is carried on. For example, say that, owing to the Malt-tax, the price of barley in the form of malt was one-tenth larger than it would be but for that tax. Then, the tax being abolished (that is, converted into a Beer-tax, and shifted in its incidence), the maltsters and brewers can now carry on their business with one-tenth less capital (required to pay for the commodity which they manufacture) than before, and thereby save the *interest* upon this tenth, and no longer needed, portion of their capital. This interest is the whole thing saved throughout. Nevertheless the tax is merely shifted to the beer-sellers, and also, as above said, it is increased by the addition of at least £400,000. Before they can sell the beer, the tradesmen have to pay the whole of the amount of the old Malt-tax and £400,000 more! Thus, what is saved to the maltster and brewer is put upon the beer-sellers, in the shape of licences. And thus there is no reduction in the price of beer,—Mr Gladstone himself says so, and so he means it to be. The brewers, it is true, will save (from less capital being necessary in their business) £400,000 a-year; but this sum is added to the old Malt-tax, and, together with it, is imposed upon the manufactured article before it can reach the consumer—the whole tax, as already said, falling now upon the beer-sellers. Thus the taxation upon the produce of the barley-crop is *actually* larger than before; and, after allowing for the economy effected by the *shifting* of the tax,

its burden is at least as heavy as before.

Accordingly, we repeat—except as regards a freer use of malt for feeding stock—this abolition of the Malt-tax does not benefit farmers one farthing. But this is only one-half of the measure; and the other half is as injurious to our farmers as can well be imagined. Indeed it is the only remaining injury which “free trade” can impose upon them: and a very serious one it is. Under the Malt-tax, barley, partially supplemented by sugar, was the only material used for malt. But now, the field is thrown open to the use of every conceivable kind of grain or other article from which malt can be profitably produced. What will be the result? Barley has been the only grain-crop in which British farmers can hold their own in competition with foreigners. But now—at least, it is merely a question of time—the prime requirement for our fine English barely will cease, and its place in malting will be occupied by sorghum, rice, maize, or other products of foreign growth.

Such are the facts of the case. We can hardly say that the farmers greatly deceived themselves, or formed any great expectations from Mr Gladstone's abolition of the Malt-tax. As one county member said a year ago, “the farmers were pleased with Mr Gladstone's attention.” But, had they understood the matter, they would have vehemently exclaimed, “Save us from such friends!” Those who have deceived themselves upon this important matter, have themselves to blame. It is true that Mr Gladstone spoke *as if* he were doing something fine for the farmers: he was elaborate in exposing the defects of the Malt-tax; he admitted that the farmers had been unfairly dealt with; and he took credit to himself for at length

ridding them of (as he called it) "their old enemy." Such a style of speaking was natural enough under the circumstances; but it says little for the intelligence of the agricultural classes if they blindly swallowed these ordinary phrases of rhetoric, instead of examining the matter for themselves. And had they done so, they would have seen a year ago—what perhaps they are beginning to see now—that this measure is a fatal blow to them, and that the matter-of-course sympathy which Mr Gladstone expressed towards them was really a mockery. Nevertheless—apart from these rhetorical smooth sayings—it is only fair to Mr Gladstone to say that he concealed nothing. He said, plainly and directly, that, as a result of this change, he expected to see foreign substances of various kinds employed in malting; nay, he even said that it was highly probable that barley might be entirely dispensed with in beer-making,—that it would soon be as entirely supplanted in malting "as rags are now in paper-making!" And this year he exultingly tells the House that this supplanting of barley is already begun, and promises to be highly successful. We need say no more. *Such* is the true character of Mr Gladstone's "abolition of the Malt-tax;" and if any of our agricultural readers continue to be thankful to him "for his attentions," they will be as wanting in common intelligence as in regard for their own interests. Beer made without barley, or even without the fine barleys in which England excels!—what a prospect for British agriculture! Our heavy soils are going a-begging: our light barley soils alone have prospered. And now their chief produce is ceasing to be in demand, and barley-growing will cease to pay, not from the competition of foreign barley, but

because the old use and demand for barley have ceased.

We have but one more comment to make upon the Budget,—and it can be said briefly. Mr Gladstone was at great pains to show that, for a good many years past, the prosperity of the country, as shown by its tax-paying powers, has been on the wane. Well, if this be so, what (according to his antecedents) ought to be Mr Gladstone's remark and inference? Not a few of our readers can remember—and it is a matter of history—that, since 1851, Mr Gladstone, and Liberals of all hues and sizes, have constantly appealed to the growing prosperity of the country—its expanding foreign trade, and the productiveness of the taxes—in proof of the exceeding excellence of the commercial policy of the Liberal party. "It is all owing to free trade!—it is all the doing of Liberal legislation!" Well—for good or evil—we have all this legislation still. Let, then, Mr Gladstone argue as he used to do, and what could he do but place himself and party on the stool of penance, or at least of penitence? The grand commercial prosperity of Great Britain, he says, is on the wane,—has been steadily declining, by Mr Gladstone's showing, for several years. If, then, the old exulting arguments of the Liberal party were well founded—if the judgment is to go by results, and if the current prosperity of the nation is to be the test of the legislation established, and still in vogue,—what but condemnation thereof is to be found in this "eleventh, and probably the last," of Mr Gladstone's Budget-speeches? Here, too, is Nemesis! The old arguments of Liberalism, so exultingly paraded since thirty years ago, have now become self-destructive; while the "irresponsible" utterances and pledges of Mr Gladstone since February 1874 have been flagrantly belied.

TRUE MAGIC.

TO W. W. S.

I.

THERE dwelt of late by Tiber's flow
 A Sage of aspect to inspire
 Weird thoughts in those who marked the glow
 Of eyes where Rosicrucian fire
 Gleamed hollow, and whose look remote
 Some far-off mystery seemed to note.

II.

'Twas rumoured, those who sought the tower
 Where lone and vigil-worn he sat
 All darkling at the midnight hour,
 Consorting with the owl and bat,
 Came forth with pallid lips to tell
 Of ghostly things that there befell.

III.

For he could bid a slumberer's thought
 Through time and space its passage wing,
 With news by docile spirits brought
 Could make the smitten table ring,
 And e'en (dread thought!) from dust could raise
 Like life the folk of other days.

IV.

Much of these feats did he impart
 To one, a fellow-sojourner
 For Art's sake in this realm of Art,
 As once they left the city's stir
 And passed beyond the ancient wall
 Along the broad-browed Viminal.

V.

Replied this last, "Faith, too, have I
 In arts which may the dead restore;
 Dost ask example?—see, hard by,
 The studio of my friend:—its door
 To us (though absent he, of late)
 Is free,"—and so they entered straight.

VI.

The Wizard, rapt, paced dreamily
 The studio round; with absent glance
 Passed all the noble statues by,
 Preferring to recall, perchance,
 What yesternight's long *séance* gave
 Of tidings from beyond the grave.

VII.

"Mark," said the other, "how my friend
Makes his unbodied thoughts our own,
Persuades the plastic forms to blend,
Then turns them into breathing stone;
Almost with awe I look around,
And half believe 'tis holy ground.

VIII.

"See where yon block of Parian stone
Awaits his hand:—within it lie
Love, hate, joy, anguish;—he alone
The shrouded passion can descry;
His chisel is the wand of might
Will bring the latent soul to light.

IX.

"What Art divine, to rend the veil
That wraps the beings of the past!
Nay, more, the spirit's husk and shale,
Its accidents, aside to cast,
Till in these forms around we view
The master-motive shining through.

X.

"The soft Egyptian musing here
Forgets her queenly pomp and sway;
Love's vassal she; in thought she's near
Her amorous Roman far away;
Creeps in her ear the plash of Nile,
By Tiber strays her soul the while.

XI.

"Now mark the Queen whose pomp of soul
Made Babylon a dwelling fit
For gods:—here will that scorns control,
And pride, and lust of empire, sit
Enthroned;—if Love may venture nigh
'Tis with trailed wing and abject eye.

XII.

"Wouldst view the god in fairer guise?
See here in SAPPHO'S form he beams,
All thrilling in a soft surprise
She harks to tones late heard in dreams,
With lips that murmur, eyes that long—
The spirit of a Paphian song.

XIII.

"Canst show, with all thy magic power,
How, 'neath an evil spirit's wing,
A soul is darkened? In his hour
Of rayless gloom see SAUL the King,
Majestic still though sore opprest,
Clutching the beard that hides his breast."

XIV.

The Wizard paused before reply,
As one whose thoughts are elsewhere,—
"These forms are born of fantasy,
And wrought by other hands would bear
Another aspect—I evoke
The people as they walked and spoke.

XV.

"No fancies:—those we call the dead
Are close to hearing and to sight;
To lure them from the world we dread
Needs but a nature tuned aright,
A magic known to witch and sage
In every clime and every age.

XVI.

"If, of this necromantic power
You ask for proof, come visit me
In private and propitious hour,
When, duly reverent, you shall see
The forms of those yourself shall name,
King, poet, warrior, winsome dame.

XVII.

"At my command, the self-same face
That Antony upturned to kiss
Shall smile on you—your eye shall trace
The features of Semiramis;
And, as dead Samuel rose for Saul,
The Hebrew king, obey my call.

XVIII.

"Sappho in lyric utterance
Herself shall manifest—you'll hear
What held all Lesbos listening once."
Observed the sculptor's friend: "I fear
'Twill show, if her authentic verse,
How death has changed her for the worse.

XIX.

“But not alone live here again
Those who once were ;—the shadows vast
Whose birthplace was a poet’s brain
Take substance ; or a people past,
Or vanished faith, compact is brought
Before our eyes, in marble wrought.

XX.

“I know not if MEDEA stood
One moment to inflame her heart
With thoughts of Glaucé, that the flood
Of jealous rage might force impart
To flash aloft yon dagger bare—
But, if she did—behold her there !

XXI.

“Grief veils, as twilight veils the sky,
The beauty of this maiden’s face,
Touches the features tenderly,
Transmutes, not hides, the charm and grace ;—
Lone princess, all her glories fled,
JERUSALEM mourns, uncomforted.

XXII.

“That listening SIBYL, rapt and awed,
Hears through the stillness of the shrine
Dread tokens of the coming God ;
From those sad lips the will divine,
Dim prescience, wisdom veiled, would come
Ere yet the oracles were dumb.

XXIII.

“Here are no fading ghosts, mere things
Of air. As in the Pharaoh’s land
The giant forms of ancient kings
Rise vast above the desert-sand,
So, o’er the flats of everyday,
The larger life that these portray.

XXIV.

“This, the true magic, can compel
True homage, both of mind and heart ;
And he who wields such potent spell,
Endowed by nature, nursed by art,
May claim inheritance through these
With Phidias and Praxiteles.”

THE NEW NOSTRUM FOR IRELAND.

It must be with a feeling of hopelessness, if not of despair, that the British Parliament again addresses itself to a reorganisation of the Irish Land Laws. Twice already within the last twenty-one years have the relations between landlord and tenant been radically altered in Ireland, each time in assured confidence that the grounds of popular grievance had been removed, and that increased prosperity to the country and loyalty to the Crown must necessarily flow from the new enactment. A Legislature must be sanguine indeed that hopes by remedial measures to extract good results from a soil upon which previous efforts of a similar character have made no favourable impression. Each concession to Irish clamour has been repaid by new and more grasping demands; and every bid made for the goodwill and fraternity of the Irish people has been met by revilings louder and more bitter than before, by increased enmity to British rule, and by a more active hostility to government, law, and order. We have done much for the Irish people during the last quarter of a century: we abolished the Church Establishment, which was presumed to strike the people in the light of an injustice—and we twice altered the Land Laws, at the expense of the owner of the soil, in the interest of its cultivator; and when all this has been effected, we find ourselves farther off than ever from the ultimate aims towards which we supposed ourselves to be working. It follows from these painful facts that we should seriously ask whether experience holds out any hope of our

being able to allay the discontent of Ireland by benevolent legislation; or whether Charles Lever was not right when he said, "To suppose that you can reach the permanent discontent of Ireland by legislation is absurd. You might as well try to cure the small-pox by Act of Parliament." The only alternative left us is, to presume that in our previous legislation we have mistaken the real sources of Irish grievance, or that these sources are not to be touched by anything the British Parliament can do to stop them up.

Now that a new Land Bill is before the public, it is necessary to ask what assurance the Government can possess that it will succeed in effecting what the two last Bills have failed to bring about. The Land Law of 1860 was passed at a time when a judge at the Cork assizes described the ferocity of the people as "not to be surpassed by what takes place among the most savage tribes inhabiting any portion of the earth." The violence of the day was laid at the door of the Land Laws; and it was assumed that if we wiped away the feudal relations between landlord and tenant, if we provided free scope for the law of contract, and if we supplanted the embarrassed and indolent owners of estates by landlords with capital and business habits, we should extinguish once and for all the Irish Land question. Ten years after, it was found out that we had been going on a wrong tack; that contract was not altogether suited to the circumstances of the simple Irish peasant; that the State must aid him in the protection of his interests; and that security of tenant-right was alone

wanting to make him a loyal and contented subject. He got this security—a substantial boon for which his landlord has had to pay; and the account to which it has been turned is, that the Irish masses are more unloyal than ever, their demands more wild, and their conduct more lawless and brutal. “Crimes more atrocious, more savage—I don’t say unchristian, for I think that is no word to apply to these offences—could hardly be committed,” said Baron Dowse, speaking of agrarian outrages at the Connaught assizes last winter. “In the province of Munster every farmer’s boy, every farmer’s son, and persons of that class, seems to be armed with a rifle and a revolver, and they certainly have been used freely in the commission of outrages,” was the remark of Mr Justice Fitzgerald in Munster at the same time; and he added, “True liberty has ceased to exist, and intolerable tyranny prevails. Life is not secure, right is disregarded, the process of the law cannot be enforced, and dishonesty and lawlessness disgrace the land.” These are testimonies to the condition of Ireland after the beneficial Land Bill of 1870 has been ten years at work among the people—a Bill under which Mr Gladstone predicted, when he brought it forward, that “peace, order, and a settled and cheerful industry will diffuse their blessings from year to year and from day to day over a smiling land!” We gave the tenants security; but where are the “peace, order, and settled and cheerful industry” which we expected in return? The reply which the present condition of Ireland makes is in the true spirit of Caliban:—

“You taught me language, and the profit
on’t
Is I know how to curse: the red plague
rid you
For learning me your language.”

Before proceeding with the ungrateful task of further legislation, involving a transfer of property from loyal to unloyal subjects, Parliament ought to seriously reflect whether any reasonable prospect exists that the new Land Bill will prove a panacea for the evils of Ireland; or whether, when we have sought to satisfy the masses by stripping the present proprietary classes of their rights, we may not have to deal with a more aggravated condition of lawlessness and disaffection, after our means of bribing the people at the cost of the landowners have been exhausted.

There are many considerations connected with a measure like the Irish Land Bill to be taken into account before we can approach the provisions of the enactment. Parliament will have to ask itself what are the grounds upon which legislation is to be undertaken, what chances there are of land reform effecting an improvement in the loyalty of Ireland, and what risk there is of interference with the law of property in the interests of Irish tenants unsettling the minds of agriculturists in other parts of the United Kingdom. The Irish Land Bill is not to be looked upon as an exceptional and isolated Act of Parliament, the influence of which can be closely restricted to its immediate application. Such a measure must necessarily leaven the views with which landed property is regarded by the population of these kingdoms, must raise aspirations on the part of the agricultural classes which law has hitherto forbidden their entertaining, and must clothe Parliament with a power of overriding personal rights with which the constitution never intended that it should be intrusted. However expedient and inoffensive an Irish Land Bill might be in itself, its relative aspects must be carefully weighed by both Houses,

and its influences upon the future of the whole British land subjected to a searching scrutiny.

The reasons which have led the Government to introduce the Irish Land Bill are not so simple and straightforward as its supporters would have us believe. Down to the time of Mr Gladstone's Mid-Lothian campaign, the Liberal party were prepared to vouch for the satisfactory condition in which the Act of 1870 had placed the relations of landlord and tenant in Ireland, and would concede no necessity for alterations that were not strictly in keeping with the spirit of that measure. That Act had given the safeguards requisite for protecting the tenant from the consequences of any disadvantages under which he might labour as a party to a contract; and the only amendments that could be desirable were such as might be found essential to its more perfect working. This was the Liberal creed, professed with some pride until a very recent period; and as lately as his Mid-Lothian speeches, the Premier vaunted the benefits which the Act of 1870 had conferred upon the Irish tenants, and assumed that the peaceable and loyal feelings which it had secured were sufficient to justify him in refusing to renew the coercive measures which the Conservative Government had been obliged to employ. The change which has come over Mr Gladstone's views; therefore, has been a very sudden one; and the reasons which have induced him to sweep aside a law with the working of which he has been so much enamoured, must be very powerful. The speech in which the Premier introduced the Bill does not enlighten us as to the causes of his rapid conversion. It is little more than a year since Mr Gladstone publicly declared that the Irish were experiencing "a general sense of

comfort and satisfaction" as the result of the reforms of 1870. How comes it, then, that in the course of twelve months it is found necessary to abolish the law of contract and confiscate the rights of landlords all over Ireland to complete the condition of beatitude? A close examination of the arguments put forward by Mr Gladstone in support of a new Land Bill shows them to be very disingenuous, if not absolutely dishonest. He puts out of the question the pressure which the Land League has succeeded in imposing upon his Government under cover of the opportunities afforded it by the suspension of the Coercion Acts. He admits that the Land Laws of Ireland are more to the advantage of the tenant than those of the United Kingdom; and he asserts that the extreme plans which have been lately put forward, and the misconduct by which these have been backed up, have nothing to do with the bringing forward of the Land Bill. It follows, then, upon Mr Gladstone's own showing, that no great urgency of Irish pressure underlies the Land Bill; and the specific reasons which the Premier does put forward for present legislation, form a singularly feeble foundation for the cumbrous edifice of revolution and confiscation which is to be laid upon them. Mr Gladstone's excuses for the Land Bill are three in number: first, "that old and standing evil of Ireland—that land-hunger which really means land scarcity;" second, defects in the Act of 1870 which require to be supplemented; and third, arbitrary raisings of rent and harsh and unnecessary evictions on the part of landlords. We may grant that these reasons afford an excuse for amending the law, without conceding that they constitute a plea either for urgency or for an extreme measure. That there is "land-hunger" in Ireland is unquestionable, but it is analogous to that

physical hunger which, with scarce means to purchase bread and cheese and a pint of ale, longs for champagne and *pâte de foi gras*—a taste which, however much Parliament may sympathise with it, the State is under no obligations to gratify. The Bright clauses in the Act of 1870 directly aimed at satisfying this land-hunger, and gave most exceptional facilities to the Irish cultivator for occupying waste lands and for becoming his own landlord; but no fact is more clearly established by the evidence offered to the Land Commissions, than that the Irish cultivator does not greatly care to avail himself of a scheme the elementary conditions of which involve an additional exercise of industry, prudence, and self-denial.

Mr Gladstone dwells very lightly upon the defects in the present Land Act, and lays the blame of them upon the changes effected on the Bill in the House of Lords. If these defects are admitted, they afford justification for a Bill to amend the law in the light of the experience gained during ten years' working, but no legitimate ground for overthrowing the measure and supplanting it by one of an entirely different character. To break and throw away a toy that does not please the fancy, savours more of the petulant child than the deliberate statesman. The evidence offered to Lord Bessborough's Commission, and the counsels of many able and experienced economists who have investigated the Irish Land question, have revealed several respects in which the Act of 1870 might be amended, so as to give greater security to the tenant and facilities to the intending purchaser without resort to the extreme course of either superseding or confiscating the rights of the landlord. But the new Bill does not aim at amending the Act of 1870; its object is to extinguish it, and to replace it by

a measure that is directly subversive of the very principles on which that Act was professedly based.

The third reason advanced by the Premier for the new Bill was the arbitrary raising of rent and the frequency of harsh and unnecessary evictions. With regard to these pleas, Mr Gladstone either does not know, or chooses to misunderstand, the facts. For the rise of rents, his own policy, introducing as it did elements of difference and mistrust between landlord and tenant, is in many instances wholly responsible. The evidence published by the Bessborough Commission establishes beyond controversy that the Act of 1870 has caused numerous landlords to enhance their rents. Nor can they be said, in doing so, to have been seeking to defeat the working of the law. The last Act either transferred, or might be made the means of transferring, to the tenant considerable interests previously vested in the landlord; and the latter must not be assumed to have erred either morally or legally in endeavouring to recoup himself. Setting aside the evidence of those who were notoriously malcontent, or who had personal quarrels with their landlords, we find no grounds in the Bessborough blue-book for supposing that the Irish tenants are more unfairly rented than the agricultural classes of Great Britain. The statistics collected by the Dublin Land Committee go to show that "on 74 acres out of every 100 the tenants pay now the same rents as they paid between 1850 and 1860." There are, of course, bad and grasping landlords in Ireland, chiefly of the class who were introduced under the provisions of the law of 1860, designed to open up "free trade in land;" but it has yet to be shown that the whole can justly be made to suffer for the misdeeds of a part. There are many grasping employers of

labour among us ; but because these take advantage of their position to grind the faces of the poor, Mr Gladstone would scarcely, we imagine, go the length of introducing a measure that would insist upon employers in general recognising the right of the workmen to share in the profits of capital, giving them fixity of situation, and allowing them to dispose of their berths to any artisan more needy than themselves. The parallel is closer than many may suppose, for the rights of the capitalist will not long be able to claim immunity after those of the landlord have been sequestered by the State. Arbitrary evictions are no doubt to be deplored ; but if we look at the statistics of these in Ireland, we shall fail to find in them a very strong argument for such a course of legislation as that now proposed. During the last ten years, as shown by the Land Committee, the annual average of evictions has been at the rate of 1 for 1860 tenants. Taking the circumstances of the tenants into account, their undoubted improvidence, the pressure which has lately been put upon them against paying their rents, as well as the bad years through which they have had to struggle, the conclusion from this low average is irresistible that there must have been very great forbearance on the part of the Irish landlords, and that no data on this head exist to warrant the Government in confiscating the right of eviction, by which the owner of land is at present able to protect his property.

But if we accept all these reasons of Mr Gladstone in their fullest sense, what do they amount to ? Grounds, very possibly, for amending the present law so as to more fully protect the tenant in his present rights, to impose some check upon rack-rent, and to place a penalty upon harsh and unneces-

sary evictions. A measure of this kind, of which all men would have readily recognised the sense and the moderation, is not, however, sufficiently original or heroic for a statesman of Mr Gladstone's personal ambition.

Two Commissions have inquired into the working of the relations of the law of landlord and tenant in Ireland since the time when the action of the Land League sought to make the subject a means of revolutionary agitation. The first, presided over by the Duke of Richmond, recommended legislation to protect the tenant from an arbitrary increase of rent in consequence of the increased value that has been given to his holding by the expenditure of his own capital and labour ; but its recommendation was accompanied by the implied condition that such legislation should not involve injustice to the landlord ; and Mr Bonamy Price, one of its most eminent members, felt bound to add to his Report a direct condemnation of the demands popularly known as the "three F's," which he characterised as "false in principle, both socially and economically, as calculated to perpetuate the peculiar evils from which Ireland is suffering, and to arrest that increase of production from which alone she can hope to advance towards prosperity." Lord Bessborough's Commission, on the other hand, recommended legislation on the principle of the "three F's" in the case of yearly holdings, and propounded a rambling and confused scheme of land reform, which the Government has made more unworkable in incorporating it in the present Bill. It is important to note that the constitution of this Commission was two Liberals, two Home-Rulers, and one Conservative ; and that Mr Kavanagh, the Tory member, recorded his dissent from the Report of the majority in a do-

cument which entirely swept away the specious reasoning of the Report itself; while the Home-Rulers differed so widely from the Report, and from each other, as to demonstrate very clearly the hopelessness of any possible agreement among authorities, even with evidence before them, upon the reorganisation of the Irish land.

Mr Gladstone's treatment of the labours of these Commissions in the speech in which he introduced his Bill deserves notice. He seeks to torture the guarded suggestions of the Richmond Commission into a recommendation of the characteristic principles of his project. On the other hand, he affects an indifference to the Bessborough Reports, which would not have been undeserved if he had not transferred so many of their proposals to the new Bill. Evidently the Premier is anxious that the glory of his new scheme of spoliation should not be shared with any of his followers. It may be remembered, too, that early in the session there was a disposition to push on the Land legislation without waiting for the publication of the Bessborough Report, when the Land Bill would have struck the world with an amazement which has been considerably modified by the appearance of the recommendations upon which it has been based.

We have now seen the reasons which, according to Mr Gladstone, necessitate a sweeping reform of the Irish Land system: but we must also consider those which he has either denied or ignored; and we are greatly mistaken if these latter will not be admitted to have gone further with the Government than the ostensible ones which they have put forward. We have remarked that Mr Gladstone's views on the Land question have undergone a sudden and violent change; and he himself has given no explanations

sufficient to set forth how that change has been brought about. In the spring of 1880 he looks with satisfaction at the Irish Land question, and thinks only of perfecting the Act by amendments consistent with its spirit. In the spring of 1881 nothing will satisfy him except to sweep away both the Act and the landlord. It is worth an effort inquiring why this changed attitude was taken up; and if we fail to probe the Premier's real motives, he has his own reticence to thank. Anxious as Mr Gladstone was all through his career in Opposition to follow courses the extreme opposite of those pursued by the Beaconsfield Government, the policy adopted by the Conservative Ministry towards Ireland placed him in a decidedly awkward position. A Commission appointed by the Tories to inquire into the working of the Land Laws reported in favour of sensible reforms, which the Beaconsfield Government would doubtless have striven to carry out had it remained in office. This of itself was sufficient to set Mr Gladstone thinking how he might outbid his rivals. Lord Beaconsfield when he appealed to the country took his stand in a great degree on the necessity for curbing the lawless tendencies which Irish agrarianism was developing, and for securing all classes in the exercise of their rights under the firm authority of the Crown. This was quite enough to make Mr Gladstone cast about him in search of a policy diametrically different. Conciliation and redress were to be the watchwords of his Government towards a country which he had pronounced to be within "a measurable distance of rebellion." Although crime of the most brutal character was rampant in Ireland, and the rule of the Land League rapidly displacing that of the Government, he refused to renew the

Peace Preservation Acts, which the previous Government had already made preparations for continuing. He gave full play to the efforts of the Land League to stir up a deadly war between landlord and tenant, and allowed assassination, cattle-maiming, and "Boycotting" to do their work undisturbed until his own followers felt themselves compromised by the inactivity of the Government. If under the Conservative Government the Land question had failed to arrest the attention of Great Britain, Mr Gladstone and Mr Parnell, working each in his own groove throughout the summer of 1880, soon supplied that defect. The artifices of the latter, aided by the apathy—perhaps it would be more correct to say the encouragement—of the former, soon matured a case for parliamentary intervention. The principle of compensation for disturbance propounded by the Land-Leaguer Mr O'Connor Power, and embodied by the Government in a Bill, marked the turning-point in Mr Gladstone's Land policy; and its summary rejection by the House of Lords at once supplied the Premier with a motive for gratifying his Radical colleagues and for coercing the Legislature into undertaking a crusade against Irish landowners. Mr Gladstone loftily denies the influence which the operations of the Land League have had upon the question; indeed, considering how greatly the efforts of the League itself were aided by his own policy, he could hardly for shame's sake have acknowledged how much his Bill stands indebted to the League agitation. Mr Parnell is more honest, and boldly claims for his organisation its share of the credit for the Government's confiscatory scheme. When the last Irish Land Bill was passing through the House of Commons, Mr Disraeli implored the members not to legislate in a panic,

"as if Rory of the Hills were waiting for them in the lobby." Mr Gladstone now seems as terrified at the agrarian agitation as if the Land-Leaguers were about to take possession of the Treasury bench. But there are traces of an even more insidious agency than the Land League in the new Bill. Returned as he was to power by a democratic upheaval, Mr Gladstone keenly feels what he owes to British Radicalism, and is never forgetful how fond it is of violent and drastic measures. He has for a colleague in the Cabinet Mr Bright, whose long life has been spent in preaching peace among nations, and in stirring up war among classes, and who has laboured for many years to break down the landed system of Ireland. There is also Mr Chamberlain, equally with Mr Bright a sworn foe to landed property; and there can be very little doubt that the influence of these two Ministers has been thrown heavily into the scale against the interests of the Irish landlords. To the general astonishment of all who knew their principles, both Mr Bright and Mr Chamberlain remained in the Cabinet, and aided the Premier to pass the Coercion Acts; and the suspicion raised at that time that they would receive a *quid pro quo* in the Land Bill has been amply justified. While ostensibly governing as a Liberal Minister, Mr Gladstone is fettered at every step by his liabilities to, and dependence upon, the extreme Radical element in Parliament; and the present confiscatory policy adopted towards Irish landowners is more directly aimed at propitiating Radicalism among ourselves, than at promoting a settlement of the Land difficulties in Ireland that will be worthy of the British Government and just to all classes of interests involved.

To sum up: we have seen that Mr Gladstone's reasons for Land

legislation are not in themselves sufficiently strong to warrant a revolutionary measure; that the time which has elapsed since he boasted of a "general sense of comfort and satisfaction in Ireland, such as had been unknown in the previous history of the country" (March 31, 1880), is too short to have developed necessities on the part of the Irish tenants, such as would justify the wholesale confiscation of the landlords' rights in their favour; and that whatever additional urgency may have since that time been imported into the question, is due in a great measure to the impunity which Mr Gladstone's Government itself extended to the operations of the Land League during the summer and autumn of 1880.

The Bill itself possesses the advantage of being able to repel investigation and criticism by its complex and confused character. We can best compare it to the heavy blackthorn bludgeon which the Irish peasant cuts from a hedge to fell his landlord with, without even taking the trouble to whittle and trim its knobs. It is a *brutum fulmen*—an arbitrary measure of an arbitrary Minister, founded solely on the power of a parliamentary majority. It has no precedent or parallel in the history of Land legislation; and no arguments from the past, or prospects from the future, to recommend it to the country. The provisions of such a Bill are generally tested by the principles of political economy, so far as these are agreed upon; but Mr Gladstone's measure has been conceived upon principles so utterly adverse to the spirit of both political economy and progressive law, that we can derive almost no assistance from these sciences in determining its character. We can, however, see at a glance that it sweeps away freedom of contract,

imposes severe restraints upon individual liberty, and introduces conditions which render the future progress of Irish agriculture almost wholly impossible. The powers of the only class in Ireland whose loyalty can be depended on, and by whose co-operation we are accustomed to aid the Irish in their frequent seasons of distress, are summarily confiscated without compensation and without any guarantee that the tenants who are to be benefited at their expense will prove more loyal and better subjects than we have ever hitherto found them. As Mr Gladstone disavows the political attitude of the Irish tenantry as a cause of his legislation, we cannot assume that the Bill contemplates directly effecting any immediate improvement in that respect. The Premier on this occasion does not dare to anticipate that "peace, order, and a settled and cheerful industry" will flow from the new law. "Justice is to be our guide" in the present legislation, apart from any secondary effects which we expect to achieve upon the minds of the Irish; and the chief characteristic of this "justice" is the proposal to start with robbing the landlords of some seventy or eighty millions' worth without any equivalent, or even the expression of a hope that they will be less liable to assassination after they have been eased of their property. Much unnecessary surprise has been expressed that no provision should have been made for compensating landlords, and appeals have been made to the language used by Mr Gladstone in 1870. "I do not think," he then said, "that anything dishonourable—anything that tends to the injury of another—has been projected by those who have set up perpetuity of tenure for the Irish occupier as their favourite scheme; because we have not a

doubt that they have seen that inasmuch as perpetuity of tenure, on the part of the occupier, is virtually expropriation of the landlord, compensation would have to be paid to the landlord for the rights of which he would be deprived." But who is there who now imagines that Mr Gladstone is in any way bound by his utterances, not of ten years ago, but of one year ago? It is his special prerogative to be allowed to unsay on one day what he has said the day before. As indications of his future action, Mr Gladstone's statements are utterly unworthy of preservation. Besides, the admission of compensation into the present Bill would deprive it of that penal character, as against landlords, which, to the Land League, seems its highest recommendation.

The draft is playfully entitled "A Bill to further amend the Law relating to the occupation and ownership of Land in Ireland;" but this is too obviously a misnomer. Instead of amending, it sweeps entirely aside all the principles of the existing Land Laws, including the common law of contract. A Land Commission, consisting of three members, one of whom is or has been a judge of the Supreme Court, is to be constituted, with the apparent object of acting as a terrestrial providence to the Irish tenants; and it is practically to be made the arbiter of the whole land of Ireland, and to have the disposal of the rights now belonging to the landlords. The powers of this Commission are of the widest scope, for it is to ultimately "decide all questions whatsoever, whether of law or fact," that may arise under the Act; it is placed beyond the jurisdiction of all the courts; and there is no appeal provided, even to the House of Lords, where British subjects are entitled to seek for justice as a last resource, from any of its decisions.

It is empowered to rule the land market with the one hand and to buy and sell property with the other. It is to work through the county Civil Bill Courts, and will be so far useful in concentrating and localising in itself the unpopularity with which these tribunals are, not always justly, viewed. It is to lay down the law to the courts, who are to decide land cases by the rules and circulars of the Commission; to remodel and regulate all procedure connected with the sale, rent, and tenure of land; and to buy out landlords in order to resell their estates to tenants. The only power wanting to complete its autocracy over the Irish land is that of compulsorily expropriating landowners; but it can command this end by so many indirect means, that it will scarcely feel the want of the formal sanction. The Commission and its probable army of assistants; the "secretaries, officers, agents, clerks, and messengers" whom it appoints; the "actuaries, surveyors, and other persons" whom it employs,—are, for the comfort of the British ratepayer, to be remunerated "out of moneys provided by Parliament." As an instance of the trust to be reposed in the Commission, it is to have *carte blanche* in appointing the underlings; but the Assistant-Commissionerships are to be kept as pieces of Castle patronage, and may be usefully employed as a means of converting Home-Rulers to constitutional views. It is impossible that a body of this arbitrary and irresponsible character should not be viewed with suspicion and dislike in any free country; and it is probably for this reason that it is to be erected into a corporation, on the faith of the old saying that "a corporation has neither a soul to be saved nor a body to be kicked." It is incredible that after what has been said about the cramping effect of English institutions upon the

feelings of the agricultural population, and of the necessity for giving greater freedom to the relations of landlord and tenant, that the future interests of the Irish cultivator should be bound up hard and fast in red tape and placed in the hands of such a body, which can only carry out its work by a strict adherence to general principles, and a firm indifference to cases of individual distress or hardship.

The powers proposed to be entrusted to the Land Commission go far beyond any suggestions that we have met with on the subject. The Bessborough Commission only went the length of recommending the establishment of "a strong central court to decide the cases which are not referred to arbitration, or are not decided by it"—a body which "should hear the case of both parties and the report of the official valuator, and decide the amount of a fair rent in accordance with the principles laid down for its guidance." Even in such cases the interposition of a Commission implies a reflection upon the ordinary administration of law in the country, which we feel to be quite undeserved. The only justification for appointing a Commission would be the carrying out of such a scheme of peasant proprietary as that which the Act designs to foster; and had its province been restricted to aiding the acquisition of land by tenants, to the reclamation and settlement of waste lands, and to the promotion of emigration from over-populated districts, probably little exception would have been taken to it. But to place in the hands of a body so irresponsible the ultimate control of the destinies and interests of both landlord and tenant—in a word, to make it master and arbiter of the land in Ireland—is a stretch of legislative assumption that no Parliament in its sound senses could permit.

When we come to examine the operation of the Bill on the parties most intimately concerned, we may well be dumfounded with amazement. Is it possible, we have to ask ourselves, that the Bill is the production of British statesmen legislating under the British constitution for an integral portion of the British empire, and that too in this nineteenth century of progress? Is it not rather an enactment of Panurge for regulating the land in his viceroyalty of Salmigondin? The Bill transports us at once from the real to the ideal—from an age of fully developed rights to a primitive state of society in which men are blindly groping to ascertain what belongs to them. Had Mr Gladstone been writing on a *tabula rasa*—had he been legislating for an infant society on a new land, where the relative positions and rights of classes had still to be created—the Bill would have been perfectly intelligible. But he is dealing with relations that are the growth of centuries,—with interests that in many cases have been purchased with hard cash, and confirmed by the highest sanction that property can possess in this country—a parliamentary title; and he deals with these in this Bill as if they either had no existence, or their existence was a positive injury to the commonwealth. The disabilities which the Bill seeks to impose upon landlords in the management of their estates is almost unique in our statutes of class legislation since the days of the penal laws against Roman Catholics. The one-sided character of the proposed law is distinctly stamped upon it by the single fact that the courts and the Land Commission, which are at every juncture open to the tenant, are closed against the landlord, except when he chooses to accompany the other to seek a settlement. That is precisely the oc-

casion when the intervention of the court can be of least use; for when the landlord and tenant come to an agreement to accept the award of the court, they would in all probability have little difficulty in settling the matter between themselves out of doors. At every conceivable point the Bill steps in to protect the tenant and to forward his interest, while at the same time it wipes away all the means which the common law at present affords the landlord of protecting himself.

Much of the complex character of the Bill would seem to be due to an ingenious attempt to conceal the fact that it offers to the Irish cultivator almost all that the Land League has demanded on his behalf. The concession of the "three F's," as demanded by Mr Parnell and recommended by the Bessborough Commission, is the backbone of the Bill, however carefully the Government may seek to conceal the fact.

The sale of tenant-right under the Bill cannot, however, be said to be "free," for it is restricted at every point by conditions intended to attract the intervention of the court, and to draw the tenancy within the scope of the statutory enactment. In fact, the whole Bill may be described as an attempt to arrest and overpower the exercise of the free law of contract. From this the tenant must suffer in the end as well as the landlord; and the words of Mr Disraeli in 1870, when the first attack was made on the contract law, come back to us now with all the solemnity of a warning from the grave. "If we declare the Irish people shall not have the power of making contracts, the time may come when Ireland herself will reproach us, and say, 'The English people have treated us in the hour of difficulty as men who neither comprehended justice nor deserved freedom.'" The

tenant is to have the power to sell his tenancy "for the best price that can be got for the same." If the landlord agrees, well; if he refuses, the court intervenes, and may force him either to purchase the tenancy at its own price, or accept as a tenant a purchaser whom it pronounces to be suitable. Some reasonable grounds of refusal are left to the landlord; but then he is not permitted to be the ultimate judge of the case. The court is to decide upon the landlord's reasons of refusal, and, if necessary, force upon him an objectionable tenant if he has not the means to save himself by buying in the tenancy. Even in buying in a tenancy which is to be sold for non-payment of rent, he is placed at a disadvantage; for while in the case of sale to another he is secured in his arrears of rent, when he himself is the purchaser he loses these arrears altogether, which the ejected tenant can apparently march off with in triumph. In the sale of tenant-right, as in all its other provisions, the Bill refuses to recognise that anything is due to the private views or personal feelings of an owner of the soil. He is left no power of exercising his individual preference, unless that preference chance accidentally to chime in exactly with the views of the court and the Land Commission. The fact of the purchaser of a tenancy being "a bad character" is conceded to the landlord as a reasonable ground for refusing the sale; but here, again, the court is to determine whether the landlord's view is the right one. A landlord might with justice consider a person who had taken an active part as a Land League agitator, and who was partially responsible for the crime that has been committed under its auspices, to be "a bad character;" but the court might as likely as not discern the man to be a virtuous patriot, and

order the landlord either to accept him or buy up the tenancy. At all events, it would be highly imprudent for the landlord to object on moral grounds to a tenant, who would in all probability revenge his refusal by taking a pot-shot at him from behind a hedge. The Bill lays down no moral standard by which either the landlord or the court is to be guided.

The wide scope given by the Bill to the saleable "tenancy," which is defined as "the interest in a holding of a tenant and his successors in title during the continuance of a tenancy," confers upon the vendor a right to dispose of much more than the interest which is at present understood to be comprehended under tenant-right. As the sale is to be accompanied with the assurance of fair rents and practical fixity of tenure, the vendor is placed in a position to dispose of all the advantages, real and prospective, of a future partnership with the landlord in the soil of his tenancy. The Bessborough Commission puts this very plainly:—

"We consider the tenant upon whom has been conferred fixity of tenure at a fair rent will be in a position differing little from that of a legal owner of property in the soil, and that he ought not to be unnecessarily deprived of any of the ordinary incidents of property. Therefore he should be at liberty to sell his interest—that is to say, his right of continuous occupancy—the improvements made by himself or his predecessors in title, and all the title he has in the land, either under the law now in force, whether common law or statute, or under the statute now to be proposed—in any way he wishes."

The "tenancy" now made saleable by the Bill is therefore a greatly extended interest compared with the customary tenant-right of Ulster, or the right vendible under the Land Act of 1870; and it is calculated, with its contingent advantages, to command a much

higher price in the market. It is obvious, however, that even under the present Bill the character and disposition of the landlord must still have something to do with the tenant's comfort, and we would like to know whether the court is to set a value upon these. Thus, tenant-right under an amiable easy-going landlord ought certainly, other things considered, to fetch more than a tenancy under a quarrelsome and litigious owner. This, however, is only one of the many absurdities connected with the Bill. In some other respects the landlord is not so harshly dealt with, and the court will transfer to itself some of the odium which he at present earns in the prosecution of his rights. Damages for injury which he has received from the tenant, and compensation for the improvements which he and his predecessors have effected upon the holding, are to constitute a first charge upon the purchase-money of the tenant-right; and the court is to help him to the compensation. The sale of a tenancy by a tenant quitting it bars his claim for compensation either for disturbance or improvement, which his successor apparently purchases with the tenant-right. This seems to be an attempt to vest in the occupancy of a holding what the law has hitherto regarded as an individual's interest. But so far as we can gather from the Bill, a tenant-right which has been bought up by the landlord begins to take root anew as soon as he lets the land to another tenant; and it thus becomes a hydra-head to eat into the very heart of the landlord's property. In short, the purchase of a tenancy which may or may not be with the landlord's approbation, makes the tenant a partner with the landlord, and gives the former in reality the more active and dominant interest in the property. If there were abundance of Irish agri-

culturists with capital seeking investment, very probably a number of desirable tenants might be forthcoming under such a Bill; but unless their circumstances have been strangely misrepresented, there are comparatively few who will be able to pay down a large sum in purchase of tenant-right and still have means to farm their holdings profitably. There is much force in the remarks made by Lord Dunraven in a recent letter to the 'Times' on the effect of such free sale as the Bill intends to legalise:—

"Land would probably deteriorate, owing to the spendthrift cultivation of insolvent farmers, relieved to a great extent from the supervision of the landlord. Undue competition would force up the value of the tenant's interest to an unnatural extent. If the tenant-right acquired under free sale represented only the fair value of the tenant's improvements, nothing could be more just than to constitute free sale the law of the land. Free sale would, no doubt, work very well in England if the share in the expense of maintenance and improvement of farms, which is at present borne by the landlords, were suddenly shifted on to the shoulders of the tenants, because there is no undue competition for agricultural land in England. But unhealthy competition does exist in Ireland; and consequently, in addition to the value of the tenant's improvements, a further and excessive sum would be paid for the 'goodwill.' How excessive this would be is shown by the large sums, amounting in some cases to the fee-simple value of the land, which have been paid for possession of tenancies-at-will on estates where tenant-right did not exist. Undue competition causes great evils in Ireland. It renders it possible for landlords to raise their rents to an exorbitant extent. As a class they have not availed themselves of their position. By free sale you would transfer this dangerous power from a class which has used it at any rate very sparingly, to a class which would use it to the utmost extent."

Earl Grey, again, has added a still stronger testimony to the general evils which the Bill will introduce among the cultivating classes—a testimony all the more valuable to its having always been borne on the side of freedom and progress.

"New tenants will come into their farms," says his lordship, "having to pay, in addition to their 'fair rents,' the interest of the extravagant sums paid for obtaining possession of them. With such powerful causes in operation to bring charges upon the land, the only result to be looked for from the new law is that, in the course of no great number of years, land in Ireland will in general be held by men who, in rent and interest, will pay more for it than the present holders, while at the same time the progress of improvements by which it might be rendered more productive cannot fail to be impeded by the new restrictions in dealing with it. Instead of having got rid of the terrible evil of having habitual distress pressing upon large numbers of the cultivators of the soil, the steps taken for their relief will only have increased the pressure and extended its area. . . . The effect of competition in raising the cost of land to the holders has been to a great extent restrained, but this will be the case no longer; all power of preventing competition from working its natural effects will now be withdrawn, and in a few years, from one end of Ireland to the other, the land as a rule will be held by the cultivators under conditions which will enable them to obtain from it only a miserable existence."

Coming now to the subject of rents, we find that the Land Commission and the courts are again empowered to override the law of contract, and to reduce to a minimum the powers of both landlord and tenant to effect an independent settlement. The object of the Bill seems to be to introduce statutory tenancies of fifteen years' duration at fixed rents, renewable at the option of the occupants for another

term of fifteen years, also at fixed rents; and so on. In other words, the tenant is made the part-owner of the soil, subject to the chief condition of paying a rent which may be revised at the end of fifteen years. When a landlord gives his tenant notice of an increase of rent, he does so with the certainty that if the latter accepts the rise, he is entitled *ipso facto* to a statutory lease of fifteen years; and if the tenant does not accept the increased rent, and resolves to sell his tenancy, he is to be entitled to receive from his landlord "ten times the amount of such sum (if any) as the court, on the application of the tenant, may determine to be the excess of the increased rent over a fair rent within the meaning of this Act." We can only regard this as a direct fine upon the landlord, and a *bonus* to the tenant to enable him to secure a new tenancy. When the latter quits without selling his tenancy, he is entitled to compensation as for disturbance, the scale of which has been fixed at rates even more ruinous to the landlord than those of the existing Act. The maximum compensation under that Act has been rescinded, so that instead of £250, the maximum now payable, the present tenant is to receive £300 and upwards when his rent is over £100. The landlord is protected by certain restrictions upon the statutory tenancy in cases of persistent waste, dilapidation, subdivision, and sub-letting, for a breach of which he may apparently evict; but the Bill is so loosely put together, that the process by which he is to obtain redress is not very obvious.

But while an increase of rent at once attracts to the tenancy a statutory lease, the tenant may also obtain one at a "fair rent" by a direct application to the court. This fair rent is defined to be such as in the

opinion of the court "a solvent tenant would undertake to pay one year with another, provided that the court in fixing such rent shall have regard to the tenant's interest in the holding;" and this interest is expressly stated to include the tenant-right, or, where that does not exist, the tenant's prospective rights to compensation for improvements or disturbance. The injustice of mixing up these claims in the estimate of a fair rent, has already called forth indignant comment. It is scarcely possible that the framers of the Bill could have asked themselves seriously what was involved in this proposition. Such prospective claims can in no way be considered proper elements in the consideration of what constitutes a fair rent. Indeed, as the Bill stands, it is not apparent whether it is in the interest of the landlord or in that of the tenant that they are to be taken into account; but the one-sided character of the whole measure has readily raised a suspicion that the advantage of the latter is aimed at. Naturally, the fact that a tenant has a right to substantial compensation both for improvements and for disturbance ought to add to the fair rent. The impression, however, is, that under the clause the tenant is to be credited with his claims, now conferred upon him as rights by the Bill, and that the greater his interest in the holding, the less will be the rent he is to be called upon to pay. The clause as it stands might be interpreted by one court in favour of the tenant, and by another in that of his landlord; and equity would certainly be on the side of the latter view. It is scarcely consistent with reason that a tenant should have his rent reduced by a reference to the sum for which he is entitled to claim compensation for improvements, and be finally paid for these improvements when his tenancy determines,—or that

he should sit for a less rent because he is entitled to claim heavy compensation for disturbance. In the general rush that may be expected for buying up tenant-rights should the new Bill become law, a general rise in their value might be expected—a rise which would immediately act in the reduction of rent, under the decree of the court, and in the still further deterioration of the landlord's income. The tenant-right and the tenant's claims to compensation ought either to be left outside the conditions that a fair rent is to be based upon; or if taken into account at all, they ought distinctly to operate in the landlord's favour. The twofold construction which any court of equity, as it seems to us, might reasonably put upon the clause, is a convincing illustration of the loose and slovenly manner in which the whole Bill has been drafted.

The powers of the court to fix a fair rent, which then becomes the "judicial rent" and carries with it a fifteen years' lease, on the tenant's application, appear to be entirely absolute, and tempered only by the ironical condition that if the judicial rent is greater than the one presently payable, the landlord need not immediately enforce it, but may wait and recover on account of the difference "such amount as the court may think just" out of the purchase-moneys of the tenancy. There are very few landlords, we imagine, who, under the relations which the Bill would establish, are likely to avail themselves of this liberty. When the judge decrees them a rise of rent, they will at once enforce it, and leave to the court which has intruded itself between them and the tenants to show that consideration which the circumstances of the occupier were previously wont to call forth. Another ironical clause in the Act is that which with a grim humour provides for equities to be

administered by the court between landlord and tenant,—as if equity could have any place in a scheme the basis of which is direct spoliation.

Two escapes from the Bill are left to the landlord. He may agree with the tenant—if he can—on a thirty-one years' lease; but in this case also the contract has to come before, and be approved by, the court, so that not even in this instance is contract left to take its free course. At the end of that agreement, the tenant holds from year to year at the same rent and on the same conditions; but an increase of rent would at once convert the tenure into a statutory lease, or the tenant may of himself apply for a statutory lease with its concomitant fair rent. The exclusion is therefore but at best a temporary one. The other means of evasion is by a fixed tenancy upon conditions agreed on between landlord and tenant; but here, again, the Bill claims a right of interference to value at its option the fee-farm rent payable by the tenant "at periods of not less than fifteen years." Neither of these remedies affords much redress to the landlord against the inequalities of the proposed legislation; and secured as the tenant is in all other respects by the Bill, neither a thirty-one years' lease nor a fixed tenancy offers him much inducement to come to an independent agreement with his landlord. Tenants, also, whose holdings are rated at not less than £150, may contract themselves out of the Bill, but not out of the conditions which the Bill establishes generally for the occupation of land.

It is, however, when we come to investigate the powers given to the Land Commission and courts for the buying out of landlords, that we feel we are dealing with the real aims of the Act. The Commission, it must be remembered, is to be the ultimate authority which is to regu-

late the value of land, and it is also the authority which is, under certain circumstances, to buy out landlords, and to purchase estates for apportionment among tenants. The Land Commission is empowered to advance to a tenant desirous of purchasing his holding, three-fourths of the price, or it may enable him to buy the land in fee-farm by an advance of half the fine payable to the landlord, provided the fee-farm rent do not exceed three-fourths of the rent which the Commission would consider a fair one. In both these cases a strong temptation is held out to ambitious tenants to burden themselves with debts to the Commission, leaving insufficient capital to enable them to farm at a profit, and to enter upon a course which must lead to ultimate bankruptcy and to their being sold up. When three-fourths of the tenants on an estate appear to be able and willing to purchase their holdings by means of these advances, the Commission has the power to acquire it for them, and resell it in parcels, the portions not taken up to be allotted to the public. Repayment is to be made by a charge of five per cent, spread over thirty-five years. The conditions of the new landed gentry created under the auspices of the Commission would require qualifications of prudence, steadiness, and thrift, which we fear will not be so generally forthcoming as the authors of the Bill apparently imagine. Until half his debt has been discharged the new landlord cannot sell; nor can he subdivide or sublet, until the whole has been paid, unless he can obtain the sanction of the Commission to these transactions; and violation of these conditions authorises the Commission to sell his holding. Again, he may be sold up when he becomes bankrupt, or when a creditor gets a judgment which would divest him

of his title. When a proprietor dies, and the circumstances of his death threaten to impair the integrity of the property, the court may again sell. The practical effect of these provisions must be to make the Commission a gigantic landlord, and to attract to the Government, through it, the odium and unpopularity which that relationship involves in Ireland. In the cases where the new purchasers repay their advances—and liberal as the terms are, we do not anticipate that they will be so numerous as the promoters of the Bill calculate upon—subdivision can commence as soon as the annuity terminates; and with the extension of subdivision in Ireland we may be prepared for the extension also of the area of want and pauperism. The reflection that the imperial Treasury is at the outset to bear the expense of this costly and hazardous experiment, must also dash our satisfaction with the benevolent intentions of Government; while the salaries of the Commission and its necessarily large staff of *employés* are to be defrayed from the same liberal source. If there were any assurance that we were to be repaid by an increase of loyalty and order, there might be the less ground for grumbling on this score; but those who know Ireland best can only anticipate that the peasant will make use of his cheaply purchased prosperity to enrich seditious organisations, and to procure a newer and more effective description of firearms than his means has hitherto been able to command. To secure the safe working of the scheme, it must be accompanied either by a permanent Coercion Act, or by an assurance of the co-operation of Mr Parnell and the Land League. Suppose Mr Parnell tell the new proprietors that the advances made represent only a modicum of the redress due to them from Britain for the long years they have been

kept out of their rights, and that they must keep a grip both of the land and the money; and that "Boycotting" and the other devices of the Land League are to be employed against the agents and the operations, — what will be the result? No one will dare to bid for a holding put up for sale by the Commission if the Land-Leaguers assemble in their thousands to overawe possible purchasers. Very possibly a consciousness of the new opening afforded to agitation may have helped to enhance the satisfaction with which Mr Parnell seems at first to have hailed the Land Bill.

A question arises whether, when the cultivating proprietor has succeeded in paying off his advance and letting his property to a tenant—the desirable object which the great mass of peasant proprietors will keep in view—he is to be subject to the same restrictions as the original landlords, or is to have absolute power to do what he pleases with his property? In the latter case we would have two classes of landlords in Ireland, one entirely free and unrestricted in the disposal of their property, the other restrained and fettered in every relationship. The Bill is not definite on this point; but we may apprehend that as soon as the new proprietor begins to let, he will fall under the provisions of the Bill, and his holding will speedily disappear under the combined influences of tenant-right and of compensation for disturbance and compensation for improvement. But unless the law go a little further, and enable the cultivating proprietor to borrow without being compelled to repay, the peasant holdings can scarcely have a long existence as such. The new rights conferred upon the tenant by the Bill will immediately be treated as so much more borrowing margin, while the Bill at the outset will

unquestionably tend to the calling up of large portions of the tenant's spare capital, whether in the purchase of tenancies or in the part payment of holdings. Mr Gladstone calmly tells us that while the Land Commission will advance three-fourths of the purchase-money of a holding, the buyer may be allowed to borrow the other fourth. If the Bill aimed at the creation of a discontented and pauper proprietary as a means of transferring the land to the usurers and small shopkeepers, it could not have gone more judiciously to work. To the large class of unemployed lawyers and money-lenders in Ireland, the Bill is fraught with promises of a golden millennium.

The clauses of the Act relating to the reclamation of waste land and emigration, if the least objectionable, are also the least prominent features of the measure. Indeed, the summary way in which both these subjects are treated, shows that they form no essential element of the Act. Even the omnipotent Land Commission is not to be made the medium of reclaiming the wastes, but the Board of Works is to assist in the matter by loans to companies. As to the provisions relating to emigration, they might do much good if energetically worked; and if a tithe of the liberality were to be shown to the pauper peasant who is willing to try his fortune abroad that there is to be exercised towards him who chooses to "keep a grip" of his land, the ruinous overcrowding in many districts of Ireland might be greatly ameliorated. But from the position occupied in the Bill by the provisions both for reclamation and emigration, much is not to be expected. The real object of the project is to establish cultivating proprietors and to extinguish the present class of landlords; and as neither reclamation nor emigration can assist in

this aim, they are both regarded as very secondary matters. Certainly, if the earth-hunger of the Irish is one of the main grounds of present legislation, justice demanded that all possible endeavour should be made to stay it with the wastes before we had recourse to gratifying it by legislative robbery. Nothing establishes more conclusively the fact that the promotion of the general prosperity of Ireland is not one of the objects of the Bill, than its utter neglect of all projects that would provide employment alternative to cultivation. Some slight encouragement to manufactures and fisheries would have done more for the material improvement of the country than a huge transference of property to tenants.

A discussion on a measure like the Irish Land Bill will necessarily throw open the flood-gates of theory; and we are threatened to be deluged anew by all the dogmas of all the economists. A reference to common-sense tempered by the principles of common honesty, will contribute much more than these to an accurate understanding of the proposed legislation. However we may philosophise, the fact stands out that we intend to rob the landlord of his rights in order that we may benefit his tenant; and that the best argument we can muster will only count as an apology for our conduct. It is, we believe, beyond the power of an Act of Parliament to create values in the soil other than are already existing, hence what is given to one of the two parties connected with it must necessarily be taken from the other. We may justly theorise about the unequal distribution of property, but the law has hitherto peremptorily forbidden us to seek redress by forcibly putting our hands into the pockets of a richer neighbour. Under the new Irish Land Bill the theft will not

even have the merit of being dexterously effected. Its influence does not stop with taking from the landlord and giving to the tenant. It introduces strange elements into law, and new disorders into society, with the direct certainty of making bad worse. Looking at the higher aspects of the Bill—if such a congeries of confiscatory clauses can be said to have high aspects—we can readily see that its prominent characteristics are at variance with the principles of advanced civilisation and liberty. It attempts to impose legal restraints upon relationships which have hitherto been conducted upon grounds of moral obligation. It almost entirely excludes the exercise of the law of contract between landlord and tenant; and the discredit thus thrown upon an institution which has been the most active agent in advancing personal freedom all through the history of the world, must operate to its disadvantage in all the other relationships of life in Ireland. It cannot be looked upon as a light matter that a statesman of so accommodating views in party matters as the Duke of Argyll, who cheerfully held a corner of the pall at the funeral of our foreign policy, should find it necessary to disassociate himself from the Ministry on this question. The introduction of a proposal for such barefaced spoliation as that embodied in the Bill compromises the Government, insults the honesty of Parliament, and shakes the faith of all who have anything to lose in the Legislature. We may expect, before the measure has been disposed of, that further secessions will be added to that of the Duke of Argyll. The bond of union between the Whigs and Radicals in the Cabinet is at best only equivalent to the tie that keeps together Peachum and Lockit,—“Brother, brother, we could hang

each other!" But we shall be surprised if even this feeling be strong enough to obviate further disruption. There are still Whigs in the Cabinet who cannot forget the traditions of their party, or forfeit the respect that has been paid to it as the promoter of liberty and enlightened legislation. They have to consider that the attention, not merely of Britain, but of Europe, is anxiously fixed upon them at the present moment. It has been the boast of the British Parliament hitherto, that by its judiciousness, moderation, and impartial legislation, it has provided a model and a stimulus to other States striving for constitutional liberty. Liberals all over Europe have pointed to Great Britain as the strongest argument that representative government can be conceded without danger either to the ruling powers or to individual interests. It is the duty of Parliament to consider well whether such a confiscatory Bill as that now before it will not strike a blow that will stem Liberal progress on the Continent for many years to come. Of late, comments in the Continental journals on the decline of British parliamentary *morale* under Mr Gladstone's leadership have been too common; and the Irish Land Bill can scarcely fail to furnish the ruling classes in the European States with arguments adverse to further concession of parliamentary powers. The honour and credit of Parliament are dear to both sides of the Houses; and it is imperatively necessary that, in dealing with such a Bill, they should regard the broader as well as the more immediate aspects connected with it. It has been an unfortunate characteristic of Mr Gladstone's statesmanship all through his career, that he is never able to look beyond

the ends at which he is directly aiming; but the higher responsibility rests with the two Houses, and upon them the country depends for the preservation of the credit of British parliamentary government.

Even more important is the unsettling effect which such legislation must have upon England and Scotland. It would be folly to assume that the concessions made to the Irish tenants will have no influences upon the feelings of other agriculturists. Mr Gladstone's assurances upon this score cannot be worth more than were his pledges for the safety of the English and Scottish Churches at the time when he overthrew the Irish Establishment. The direct result of that measure has been to swell the Disestablishment agitation in both England and Scotland, until it is able to count for something as a political force. And a British Land question, if fostered by an Irish precedent, would excite a warmer interest than the abstract subject of the union of Church and State. We can see no grounds for conceding a partnership in the soil to the Irish tenant that the English and Scotch farmer might not put forward as the basis of a claim for similar privileges. Only a week or two back the Convention of Scotch Burghs passed resolutions in favour of tenant-right and against evictions, and we have already a nucleus of a Land agitation among the Radicals in England. It remains now with the Parliament to say whether such ideas are to be quickened into political life, or whether the rights of property are to be resolutely vindicated, and limits laid down once and for all to unconstitutional agitation. Its choice lies between that and a REVOLUTION IN THE LAND, which cannot be confined within the bounds of Ireland.

THE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.

It is with feelings of unmingled pain and regret, we were going to say, that we record the death of the Earl of Beaconsfield; but a truer appreciation at once suggests that there has been a glorious close to a splendid career—*felix opportunitate mortis!* There is no instance in English history of a political leadership so long maintained. There is none in which greater qualities of sagacity, independence of judgment, and tenacity of purpose have been exhibited. There is none in which a leader has been able to call forth at will such marked and increasing devotion from his followers. And notwithstanding that for twenty-nine out of the thirty-five years over which it has practically extended, it has been a leadership of a minority, Lord Beaconsfield's headship has been one of rare personal and political achievement. It is one of which the Tory party may well be proud, and to which English history as long as it endures will do homage.

It is a striking testimony to the marvellous powers which Lord Beaconsfield possessed, that in spite of the singular isolation of his position, and the overwhelming disadvantage of always belonging to a minority, his influence and authority uniformly and steadily increased. The reins once grasped, no hand proved strong enough during all those years to wrest them away, or to divert him to any serious extent from the policy which he chose to pursue. In Opposition he steadily increased his authority over the course of legislation, over Parliament, over his colleagues, and in the country. Each time that he held office in a minority, he left it a stronger man than when he en-

tered it, with reputation and *prestige* strengthened by an ordeal which, under far more favourable circumstances, frequently injures those of weaker men. And when at last, towards the close of a great career, he became Minister with an established majority, the man grew until his authority overshadowed his colleagues and the country, and he had centred in himself the whole force and representation of the empire. To sustain, with increasing credit, every successive ordeal which awaits a man who plays a foremost part on the greatest stage of events is a marvellous achievement. There was no personal reverse, no personal failure. There seemed to be no moment at which he could be pronounced unequal to the occasion, at the end of his resources, or less than master over himself and his position. In the greatest chapter of his life, which is filled with his guidance of English fortunes during the strife and passion aroused by the great Eastern Question, it was never disputed but that it was his firm and tenacious mind which regulated our policy; and that by the force of will and genius, in spite of all the eloquence and energy of no unworthy rival, his influence, at a moment when firm guidance was the sole preventive to drifting into war, predominated at home, and was more than respected abroad. Whether his policy is approved or condemned, all must admit that he himself betrayed neither weakness nor indecision, but held on his way with tenacity and resolution. Those are the qualities which render war unnecessary, and lead forward to "peace with honour." History will do justice to the memorable qualities which the great

Tory Premier exhibited, and to the ascendancy which they gave him over England and the Continent. The generation which has witnessed with enthusiasm and delight the close, animated, and brilliant rivalry between a Disraeli and a Gladstone must feel that the heroic age of English politics did not pass away with Pitt and Fox. It falls, however, to the lot of the present generation of statesmen to work upon broader lines, and with a wider legislative range than their predecessors of the Georgian era. Of Lord Beaconsfield, it may be said that he reconstructed the Tory party and placed it in accord with the sympathies, the intelligence, and the genius of the nation; that he practically settled the principle of our parliamentary representation; that he reconstituted the South-eastern territories of Europe, and gave to the Continent its charter of peace. He led the Tory party during a whole generation of men; he trained and attached to himself a skilled body of statesmen; he twice held the foremost rank with eloquence and majesty. The world, however, would never have recognised with the completeness which it ultimately did his transcendent qualities, if the six years of office with a majority had not at last opened to him the chance of a grand administrative success. These last years gave the crown to his career. From the first moment of his accession down to his sudden and unexpected fall before the blind vote of a fickle and easily influenced democracy, his supremacy was never questioned; and towards the close of his Premiership, when the elections of Liverpool and Southwark raised the hopes of his party, it looked as if he were on the point of being invested with an amount of authority greater than has ever before been conferred upon an Eng-

lish statesman, and greater perhaps than it is prudent for the English people ever to confer upon a single man.

Such a career must, as long as English history endures, be one of undying interest. In a short obituary notice like this, which is merely intended to express on the moment the feelings of a great political party for its departed chief, whose whole life and soul and energy were devoted to its service, we can only notice the more salient qualities of Lord Beaconsfield's public life.

It is a striking tribute to his unique force of character that friends and foes have alike recognised that Lord Beaconsfield's personality has been, as it were, more conspicuously impressed upon the politics of his age than that of any contemporary statesman. They refer to the transformation in the temper and spirit of English Conservatism which has been effected since the days of Peel. They refer also to the three guiding principles of his conduct,—the earnest desire to improve the condition of the masses, and to attach them to Conservative policy; the insistence with which he enforced the idea that the British empire must not merely be enjoyed but watchfully maintained; his view that an ancient monarchy ought not to drop too completely out of the thoughts of the people, and that it was not merely an effective instrument of government at present, but might at any time during any temporary and not improbable eclipse of the authority and *prestige* of the House of Commons, become a rallying-point of inestimable value. The vulgar view of Mr Disraeli's earlier years is that they exhibited levity of principle and conduct. But any one who regards them from the point of view of his writings, of the training which the works of

Disraeli the elder show that the son must have received, of upwards of forty years unrivalled consistency and tenacity of purpose in Parliament, will probably come to a different conclusion. There was no hereditary tie to either party; there was deep innate scorn for what he termed the pollution of Radicalism; there was an invincible distrust of anything like sectarianism or exclusiveness predominating in the spirit of Conservatism. From the hour that he entered Parliament, or, more properly, from the moment that he became a political figure of importance, he never swerved from the purpose of impressing his own ideal, which may be traced in his earliest writings and speeches, upon the character and aims of British Toryism.

He not unnaturally came into sharp collision with Sir Robert Peel,—a man of a wholly different type and training, in many characteristics of statesmanship Mr Disraeli's superior, but of far inferior intellectual power. Mr Justin M'Carthy, in his history, has done justice to that stroke of true genius and insight which enabled Mr Disraeli to stand forward, on the first night of the session of 1846, and practically wrest from Sir R. Peel's hands then and there the leadership of the party which he ever afterwards retained. At that time Mr Disraeli had only been eight years in the House; it was only his second Parliament; he had no powerful connections or official experience. There is no parallel to this incident in parliamentary history. The leadership thus seized was not merely retained for a session, or during a particular controversy. It never reverted to the experienced chief who had dominated successive Parliaments, and who was surrounded by men of matured reputation and experience. It was

inevitable that, in time, the man who could thus maintain his ground against a combination so powerful must succeed to office and to the lead of the House of Commons. In 1852 that event occurred. It is the only instance on parliamentary record of a man vaulting at once into that difficult post without any antecedent official experience. Mr Pitt's rise is the nearest approach to it. But in the first few months of Mr Pitt's Chancellorship, the leadership, titular if not effective, was in other hands. There had, however, been at least two celebrated precedents of conducting the business of the House of Commons in a minority—that of Pitt, in 1784, and that of Peel, in 1835. The struggle in 1852 was maintained with gallantry and skill; but it ended, as all foresaw, in failure before the combined efforts of the most disastrous Coalition that England has ever witnessed. The closing scene of that struggle is of historic interest, and the lapse of nearly thirty years has not dimmed its brilliancy. Four nights of debate had left no doubt that the great financial scheme upon which the Government had staked its existence was doomed, and that the Ministry stood face to face with an exulting and victorious combination. It was a crisis in Mr Disraeli's career, and a disastrous defeat might have associated his name with ignominious failure. But whatever the result of the division upon the prospects of the party, the leader had at least resolved to assert his own position as that of one of the most formidable personages and debaters in English politics. Meeting bitter taunts with thundering invective, he stood up to that last almost unaided encounter with all the celebrities of the House, with desperate energy, and fought for his flag with all those dauntless qualities which be-

long to a natural and irresistible "king of men." It was one of the most remarkable orations ever made; and in his equally marvellous reply, in which Mr Gladstone for the first time burst through the bonds of a deprecatory and somewhat sanctimonious eloquence, and abandoned himself to fierce and unsparing personal attack, the present Premier constituted himself the rival of the Conservative chief, and the future leader of the Liberal party. For half of the succeeding years Mr Gladstone remained under the protecting ægis of Lords Palmerston and Russell; and was saved from the consequences of his frequent imprudence. But for the remaining half of that period the two leaders have divided between them the respect and devotion of the country, with the result that, notwithstanding the almost uniform numerical superiority of the Liberals since the Reform Bill of 1832, the Conservatives have, since the death of Lord Palmerston, enjoyed a longer tenure of office than their opponents. In February 1858 this Ministry of a minority returned to power. In the interval, the Eastern Question and the Crimean war had absorbed the attention of Europe. Almost every fresh disclosure has tended to discredit the conduct of the disastrous Coalition, and the mutual rivalries which weakened the Administration, till a vacillating and half-hearted policy landed us inevitably in war, and Lord Aberdeen was dismissed from a post to which he was unequal. But the conduct of the Opposition in those days received at the time the hearty acknowledgments of Lord Palmerston, and has been applauded in all subsequent publications, from Sir Theodore Martin's 'Life of the Prince Consort' downwards. It was a successful combination of uncompromising but constitutional

opposition to the Ministry, with a steady consistent support to the policy which the nation was pursuing. It will be well if all succeeding Oppositions will, when the external fortunes of the country are hanging in the balance, distinguish with equal success between opposing and weakening the executive,—between the official representatives of the whole country, who should be supported, and the mere leaders of a rival party, who may be fairly denounced and supplanted. The Ministry of 1858 had its own foreign *imbroglios* to deal with, but found in Lord Palmerston, as Mr Disraeli acknowledged at the time, a fair and scrupulous opponent. Its main achievements were the establishment of the direct dominion of the Queen in India in lieu of the old East India Company; and the production of a reform bill which, equally with that of 1867, exploded the quack device of lowering the suffrage by a pound or two at a time. Fancy franchises and lateral extension were resorted to, for opinion was not then ripe for a final settlement of the question (which had been prematurely raised by the Whigs) on the only intelligible basis of household rating.

The fall of Lord Derby led to the re-establishment of Lord Palmerston in power; and for six years Masterly Inactivity was the order of the day. During that time there occurred the great civil war in America. One of the most remarkable points in Mr Disraeli's whole career lies in the prescience and resolutely independent judgment which he displayed during that crisis. Public opinion was to a great extent, we believe, in favour of the South. Some of the Ministers, notably Sir George Cornewall Lewis, were strongly in favour of non-intervention, and of sympathy

being directed in favour of the North. Others, and notably Mr Gladstone, took a directly opposite view; and the famous speech of the present Premier about Jefferson Davis having created not merely an army and a navy, but a separate nation, long rankled in the minds of the Americans, and formed one of their items of charge against us in the celebrated Alabama controversy. Of all complicity and responsibility of this kind Mr Disraeli kept himself and his party free, and firmly resisted all pressure to a contrary course. Whatever may have been the force of the arguments in favour of recognising and supporting the South, there was none in favour of a policy of mere irritation, and of, as far as words and omissions could make it, a malevolent neutrality. It is not too much to say that during that momentous crisis, several of the most trusted leaders of the public, if they did not actually lose their heads, adopted a course not sufficiently well considered and far-seeing to stand the test of time and subsequent experience. It is to the lasting honour of Mr Disraeli that his own conduct formed, in the judgment of all parties, a bright exception, and gave to him a peculiar personal authority throughout the course of the Alabama troubles. During those greatest of all the foreign complications with which Mr Gladstone had to deal, his rival was ever at hand to sustain and encourage his Administration. Resolved that no party struggle should by any chance ensue over a question of such momentous interest to the whole civilised world as our relations with America, he abandoned the reserve of an Opposition so far as to sanction Sir Stafford Northcote's acting as one of the Commissioners to negotiate the Treaty of Washington. Although, fortunately, the Conservative party has no share in the

responsibility for the Alabama arbitration, and its award, the country owes to the wise forbearance and patriotic sagacity of the Conservative chief its escape from still worse complications; and his policy during that trying epoch will form a chapter of solid merit in the annals of his life.

With the death of Lord Palmerston, the question of parliamentary reform again was made the prominent subject of attention, and until it was settled the work of legislation was evidently at a standstill. Lord Russell's Ministry essayed the usual experiment of lowering the suffrage by a few pounds at a time,—in this instance in the belief that £3 was the amount of diminution which was to save the State, and work a satisfactory reform. The scheme failed, and Lord Derby's Ministry of a minority was for a third time installed in office. The Reform Act of 1867 was, for good or evil, its great legislative work, based upon the principle of household suffrage. The achievement was due entirely to Mr Disraeli. It was his individual task, entirely in keeping, both in its character and the mode in which it was passed, with his antecedents and special genius. It was described by the late Lord Derby as a process of "Dishing the Whigs," and as a "Leap in the Dark!" There can be no doubt, from a perusal of Mr Disraeli's speeches, as they were at that time collected and published, that, with the exception of his first speech upon reform, as far back, we think, as 1848, before it became of urgent or present importance, these are consistent with the design of associating his name with its settlement, upon principles which might insure a fair chance of permanence. He had, in fact, made the subject his own, while Mr Gladstone was busy with finance,

and Lord John Russell was distracted by his own personal vicissitudes. The strategy and resource with which he accomplished his purpose, dumfounding his opponents without, as the result showed, unduly straining the allegiance of his supporters, are well known.

But if Mr Disraeli, in the matter of Parliamentary reform, achieved success, completely snatching it out of the hands of his rival, Mr Gladstone, on the other hand, was ready with his bid for popular support. The first question submitted to the new constituencies was an issue, framed by Mr Gladstone, whether or not the Irish Church should cease to exist as an established institution. A majority of more than 100 determined that it should cease, and Mr Gladstone succeeded to the Premiership. A series of harassing and sensational measures followed, upon a small detail in one of which, the Education Act of 1870, the great Liberal party began to crack and divide. All the activity of the Government was swallowed up in legislation, of a kind which alienated as many as it conciliated. Great administrative blunders resulted from this absorption of attention elsewhere; and as regards foreign politics, the authority, and even the legitimate influence of England seemed to be entirely effaced. In fact, at the time of the Berlin Memorandum, the manner in which that famous document was presented to our notice appeared to indicate that in the transaction of European business, foreign statesmen regarded us as entitled to less than courtesy. It was not surprising, therefore, that in little more than four years Mr Gladstone's authority was gone, and his Ministry was wrecked on the Irish University Bill.

Mr Disraeli now entered upon

the last, the most eventful, and the most famous chapter of his wonderful history. It began with his declining office for his party in May 1873, just eight years ago. The disintegration of the Liberal party was rapidly progressing, the tide of opinion had turned. Mr Disraeli refused, with his usual prescience and authority over his followers, to have his hand forced. He resolved that his opponent should go to the country with all his sins upon his shoulders, instead of being absolved by the process of resignation. With his authority too much weakened to render another session endurable, and after several defeats at isolated elections throughout the country, the Minister dissolved Parliament, and his rival, for the first time in his career, found himself at the head of a majority in both Houses of Parliament, strong in the confidence of his Sovereign and in his unbounded popularity throughout the country.

Supreme political power only arrived when age had greatly impaired his physical powers. The country, however, was weary of incessant activity, and the septuagenarian Premier was not urged forward, either from within or from without, towards sensational legislation. He left the conduct of some useful and necessary measures to his colleagues, and reserved to himself that control over the whole home and foreign administration which had been so long neglected. Ireland was pacified with the removal of all restrictions upon the issue of the Habeas Corpus writ, and by other relaxations of the restrictive code of the former Ministry. The first three years of his Premiership were spent in the House of Commons. The withdrawal of Mr Gladstone from the post of leader of the Opposition was followed very shortly afterwards by the first mut-

terings of the Eastern Question, in the shape of risings in Bosnia and the Herzegovina. The purchase of the Suez Canal shares, which has since turned out to be a great financial as well as political success, and the evident intention to assert our interests in the East, produced an immense accession of popularity to the Government; and during the year 1876 the debates bore witness to the oncoming division of opinion which was to bring Mr Gladstone back in full vigour and activity to public life almost as soon as he announced his determination to finally quit it. In August 1876, Mr Disraeli became Earl of Beaconsfield, a name destined speedily to become even more famous than that which was laid aside; for the three last years of this celebrated Ministry form the culminating point of Disraeli's life. His power was not in the slightest degree affected by his transference from one House to the other. In fact, his authority had always rested more upon the sway which he exercised over his colleagues, the House of Parliament, and the country, through its debates, than upon any enthusiasm which he created amongst the constituencies, and which, however deep-seated, was not so violent and impulsive as that which Mr Gladstone at times excites. Lord Chatham is, we believe, the only other instance of a Prime Minister passing from one House to the other during the existence of his Ministry; and in his case power was practically lost by the step. Lord Beaconsfield's elevation did not come a moment too soon. His physical powers were no longer equal to the work of the House of Commons, and he was soon to be plunged into the vortex of European politics when they were at their wildest. There was public need of all that "detach-

ment" of intellect with which he was credited, and it was well that he should be withdrawn from all lesser distractions.

The events of these memorable years are too recent to justify recapitulation. The chief personal incidents were the withdrawal at a critical moment of Lord Derby, the friend of twenty-five years, and son of the illustrious statesman whose name was so long associated with that of Disraeli; and the accession to the Foreign Office of Lord Salisbury, and the mission of both statesmen to the Congress of Berlin. The former of these incidents occasioned a touching tribute to the memory of a celebrated friendship, but also it enabled Lord Beaconsfield at length to stand forth as the champion of the public law of Europe, and boldly to insist that the arrangements of San Stefano should be submitted to readjustment by the Signatories of the Treaty of Paris. To that Treaty, confirmed in 1871, the British Minister had always appealed. He had been prevented by the agitation of 1876 and the other circumstances of the time from offering armed resistance to Russian aggression; but with the fleet stationed near the Bosphorus, Indian troops at Malta, votes of money by overwhelming majorities in Parliament, he plainly indicated that the Treaty of San Stefano must, in order to be binding, be imposed by force of arms upon Great Britain as well as upon Turkey. From this task Russia shrank, and the equitable readjustment of the San Stefano stipulations, to which she was forced to submit, resulted in the Treaty of Berlin. That treaty will remain, we hope, as a complete international settlement of the South-eastern territories of Europe, the maintenance of which will be understood to mean peace, and the disturber

of which will incur the guilt and responsibility of war.

The greatest event in the life of Lord Beaconsfield was his visit to Berlin as the First Plenipotentiary of Great Britain: the greatest day was probably his triumphal entrance into London after his return. During the Congress, and in his journey towards it, he never ceased for an instant to be the great attraction. And in Paris he is credited with having deterred Germany in 1875 from renewing the Franco-German war. The 'Times' correspondent at Paris writes: "He filled so large a part in European preoccupation, that his disappearance has produced something like the impression of the disappearance of a dynasty." The correspondent of the same paper at Berlin writes: "The deceased statesman was regarded as the restorer of the British *prestige* on the Continent," and speaks emphatically of the high honour in which he was held. Two anecdotes of Prince Bismarck may be quoted on their authority: one, that in his private cabinet a portrait of the Prince's wife hangs on the right hand of that of the Emperor, while that of Lord Beaconsfield hangs on the left, in recognition of the prominent part which the deceased statesman played at the Congress, and of the high estimation in which his great qualities were held. Another is, that the Prince used these remarkable words, in reference to the firm stand which Lord Beaconsfield had made in vindication of the rights of Great Britain:—

"‘Schouvaloff and Beaconsfield,’ he is related to have said, ‘are the two leading figures in this Congress, and I am delighted with watching them. Beaconsfield has wonderful presence of mind, is versatile and energetic, lets nothing excite him, and has admirably defended his cause. English

pride is safe in his hands: and when the negotiations were broken off on the 21st of June, he was manfully leading his country to war. It was then that I intervened. Both he and Schouvaloff have done their duty, and have saved their country from war. My only merit was bringing them together at a moment when they could not themselves make any advances.’"

But Lord Beaconsfield needed no foreign tribute to recommend his conduct to the gratitude and approval of his countrymen. He had reached the zenith of his reputation, and hardly any career in history contains a prouder episode or a more exalted fame. He had saved his country from war, and had given peace to Europe; and the world admitted that Great Britain had reconquered her old ascendancy on the Continent. Had Lord Beaconsfield dissolved Parliament on his return, he might have obtained a renewed lease of power; but it is, in our judgment, more to his permanent credit that he did not. The result of a dissolution is at any time a most uncertain thing to forecast; and he would not have acted fairly by his allies, his supporters, and the peace of Europe, if he had incurred the risk of transferring to the Liberal leaders, in the impracticable position which they then occupied, the task of presiding over the execution of the treaty. The same firmness which had won the treaty was needed to secure its execution; and not till the last Russian had quitted the Turkish empire, and the main points of the treaty had been carried out, did Lord Beaconsfield dissolve. From the date of his triumphal entry into London, Lord Beaconsfield, as we can now see, entered upon the period of his decline in power. When an Administration is growing six years old, the least change in its fortunes or in its luck is likely to prove fatal.

The isolated elections still went in his favour, and continued to do so till the dissolution; and to the last—as long as the natural term of his Ministry extended—Lord Beaconsfield was cordially, and even enthusiastically, supported. His letter to the Duke of Marlborough, the last State paper that came from his hand, spoke to the country in tones of dignity and firmness, in all respects worthy of being the last official utterances of a great parliamentary Premier.

Exactly a year elapsed from Lord Beaconsfield's resignation to his death. He died on the anniversary of his delivering up the seals of office to the Queen. The characteristic cheerfulness with which he bore the reverse was equalled only by the confident silence with which he endured all the attacks upon his policy during its progress, and during the election. He no doubt felt that he was doing a durable work, and

that he would hand down to posterity a *monumentum ære perennius* of which no eloquence could impair the value, and which no eloquence was needed to defend. During that year his personal position has been stronger than ever, the devotion of his followers completely sustained, the admiration of his countrymen and of foreign nations undiminished. It is impossible that any man should bequeath to the notice of posterity stronger proofs of the estimation in which he was held by his contemporaries, or of the ascendancy which he exercised over them. History will judge for itself the character of his aims and of his policy; but among the many illustrious names of statesmen that crowd its pages, that of Benjamin Disraeli Earl of Beaconsfield will be overshadowed by none in the splendour of his fame, and in the completeness of his devotion to the honour and interests of his country.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCLXXXVIII.

JUNE 1881.

VOL. CXXIX.

THE LAND OF KHEMI.

PART I.—THE ARSINOITE NOME.

ABOUT seventy miles to the south-west of Cairo, and twenty-five miles from the Nile, in a depression of the Libyan desert, lies a region celebrated above all others in Egypt for the luxuriance of its vegetation and the variety of its products. Known in modern days as the Fayoum, it was called by the Greeks the Arsinoite Nome, and by the early Egyptians Phiom, or "the district of the marsh;" and a tradition still exists among the country people that this marsh was reclaimed by Joseph the son of Jacob. Whether it derived another and equally ancient appellation of Ta-She, or "Land of the Lake," from the Birket el Kurûn (Lake of the Horn)—a large sheet of water on its western margin—or from the once celebrated Lake Mœris, the dikes of which still remain to indicate its former site, is not possible to determine; but its wealth of water in all ages was calculated to invest it with a peculiar charm in a country dependent, not upon

the rainfall, but upon natural conditions, for its supply of that commodity. Herodotus, Strabo, and Pliny have all written in terms of enthusiasm of this oasis, while modern travellers have bestowed comparatively little attention upon it; and hence, though a valetudinarian, I was tempted to its sequestered palm-groves, and have only since had reason to regret that the state of my health prevented my exploring it thoroughly, and exhausting its varied attractions.

There is something very unromantic in the idea of going by railway to an oasis in the desert; but I consoled myself by thinking, as I whirled along the left bank of the Nile, in a cloud of dust, that the fatigue of a three days' camel journey, which has thus been superseded, would have presented an insuperable obstacle to my trip—and endeavoured to extract from the motley throng of native passengers who crowded the second and third class carriages, that oriental flavour

which the appliances of modern civilisation are tending so rapidly to destroy.

At the station of Wasta, fifty miles from Cairo, the road branches off to the Fayoum. Here we are delayed a couple of hours to wait for the down-train; and seated in a date-grove, evidently consecrated to *al fresco* meals, to judge by the great quantity of shells of hard-boiled eggs which are strewn around, we prepare our afternoon tea, by the aid of a spirit-lamp, to the intense interest of the spectators, and sketch the curiously shaped Pyramid of Meidûm, rising in stages behind the village of that name, some four miles distant,—interesting as having furnished, from the adjoining Mastabas, the oldest sculptures in the world, and the earliest existing examples of the art of writing. Monsieur Daninos, the French Egyptologist, who unearthed these statues about ten years ago, gave me an interesting account of their discovery. It seems that the sheikh of the village of Meidûm took the unprecedented step of sending a message direct to Ismail Pasha, the late Khedive, to tell him that he had discovered caverns full of treasure in his neighbourhood. The Khedive referred the intelligence to the late Mariette Pasha, who did not attach much credit to it, but despatched Daninos Bey, who was then assisting him in his antiquarian researches, to verify it. On arriving at the spot, Daninos Bey found the sheikh in considerable trepidation from the threats of one of the local officials, who resented his having reported to the Khedive direct instead of through the regular channels. However, he was comforted by a decoration, and the promise of protection, and was requested to lead the way to the cavern. This turned out to be an unimportant little

hole; but Daninos Bey saw other indications in the neighbourhood, which induced him to believe that excavation might be attended with success—the more especially as he had got his excavating party on the spot, and was unwilling to return *re infecta*. He therefore set his men to work to uncover one of the mounds, and they shortly disclosed a slab which appeared to form part of the roof of an opening leading into a tomb. Soon the leading Arab, who had crawled into the aperture, reappeared in the utmost alarm, saying that there were living people inside. Monsieur Daninos at once climbed up the mound, and, squeezing through the opening, was startled by the life-like appearance of two seated figures with sparkling eyes and flesh-like tints. They were a young and handsome couple—the male painted a reddish brown, the female a light yellow. In their eyes were crystals, which imparted to them a peculiarly living aspect. Their features, which were calm and dignified, were as perfect as the day they were chiselled. They had been seated in this chamber, hermetically sealed from the outward air, for 5600 years, when the garish light of nineteenth century civilisation was let in upon them, and are now preserved under glass in the Museum at Boulak, where they are among its most valued treasures. They represent the Prince Raho-tep, son of King Seneroo of the third dynasty, and his wife Nefert, who both died young.

The branch train to Fayoum is a very rattletrap affair, but, fortunately, travels at so slow a rate, that the danger of its falling to pieces is comparatively remote. The traces of paint, which once adorned the carriages, are rapidly vanishing, and they look as brown and barbarous as the desert they

traverse. As first-class passengers are rare, there is only one compartment for them, and this is seldom used, and becomes a permanent repository of dust. However, we were glad to take possession of it, "bag and baggage," and crawled out of the station in a westerly direction, leaving the pyramid and village, which occupies the site of the ancient city—"Beloved of Tum"—to the right. The high mound on which the modern village of Meïdûm is situated must contain the *débris* of one of the oldest cities in Egypt, and would probably well repay excavation, as its name occurs on the monuments of the Third Dynasty, B.C. 3900.

It takes scarcely a quarter of an hour to traverse the cultivated strip which intervenes between the hill and the desert—just before reaching which, on the left, we pass a village of pigeon-towers, that presents a curious appearance, as the population of the village is comparatively small, while that of the pigeons is relatively great. They inhabit conical domes of mud, like large bee-hives, which are grouped upon towers and upon narrow oblong constructions, built expressly for them—eight or ten upon each tower, and sometimes as many as thirty upon one roof. In these mud-cones earthenware vessels are embedded, opening inwards; while a row of holes admits the bird into the interior of the structure, where, as well as on the outside, numerous perches are arranged. The advantage of this contrivance is, that whenever a pigeon is wanted, the owner goes at night into the house while the birds are in their nests, and abstracts as many as he chooses without disturbing the others. The swarms of pigeons which are thus reared, serve the double purpose of furnishing food and manure; but I doubt whether, on the whole, they

do not do more harm to the young crops than good to the land.

We now emerge from the desert, and the road gradually ascends for a few miles to a summit-level of about a hundred and forty feet above the level of the sea—as great an altitude, probably, as that attained by any railway in the country. On our left is a range of sand-hills, and beyond it we can distinctly observe the depression which was once filled by the waters of Lake Mœris, and a portion of which is now a sandy desert; its southern extremity is marked by the Pyramid of Illahoon, also clearly visible. A little further on we cross the Bahr Bela Ma—a broad *wady* with precipitous sides, down the centre of which winds a narrow sluggish stream; and near it we observe the remains of some of the old embankments of the lake. In a few minutes more we are cheered by the sight of a grove of date-trees, and our short trajet of fifteen miles of desert is at end. We are at El Edwa, the first village of the Fayoum; and a run of five miles more through richly cultivated country lands us at Medinet el Fayoum, the capital of the province, and practically the terminus of the railway, so far as ordinary travel is concerned.

Although the kindness of the Government had provided us with lodgings (for hotels are unknown in the Fayoum), our first night, owing to the late hour of our arrival, was spent in a tent, and I was lulled to sleep by the wailing and sighing of the numerous water-wheels or *sakkyas*, which are a special characteristic of the Fayoum. They differ from those of other parts of Egypt, inasmuch as the motive power does not consist of oxen or buffaloes, but of the water itself,—the natural incline of the country giving the canals a sufficient cur-

rent to enable them to turn these huge undershot wheels, which are made of date-fibre, on which are fixed alternately earthen jars and wooden paddles; as they revolve they groan and strain under the pressure, as though some mortal injury was being inflicted upon them. It is not the harsh creaking of wood, but the plaintive moan of over-stretched fibre; and as the whole province resounds with their lamentations, one almost feels inclined to pity it as the victim of some serious nervous disorder. There was something very weird in the sound that first night, as with mournful cadence it rose and fell in the still air, now sinking almost to a sigh, now rising to a harsh scream, and my first impulse in the morning was to go and inspect the primitive mechanism which thus fertilises the whole country with its never-ending day and night rotation. As Medinet el Fayoum is the great centre of water distribution for the province, there are probably a greater number of these water-wheels collected here than elsewhere, and the place is surrounded by a network of canals and rivulets which encompass it at all seasons with a setting of the richest verdure, and have made its orchards and gardens the theme of the traveller and historian from the earliest times. All this is due to the Bahr Youssef, or "river of Joseph," which is, in fact, a branch of the Nile, diverted from that river at Siout, and which, after a tortuous course of upwards of two hundred miles along the base of the Libyan hills and parallel with the Nile, takes advantage of a depression in the chain, and is conducted by sluices at Illahoon into the province—flowing through the town of Medinet in a broad deep stream until it reaches its northern end, when it is dammed across and diverted into seven different chan-

nels and ceases to be navigable. Before this occurs, however, numerous minor canals and *sakkyas* keep robbing it of its water; and just outside our place of abode, which was at the entry to the town, three considerable streams, all turning water-wheels, diverged from it into the country. Many traditions connect Joseph in the popular mind with this river and city; but nothing definite upon this subject has been discovered. A Copt told me that the Fayoum was the creation of Joseph when Pharaoh gave him *pleins pouvoirs* to deal with the famine. That he then conceived the idea of diverting the waters of the Nile into this natural depression, and turned what had formerly been a marsh into a most fertile province; and a further tradition exists to the effect that he was buried here, and that it was from this neighbourhood that his body was removed by the Jews at the time of the exodus. Unfortunately for the Copt's story, evidence of the strongest kind exists to show that the Fayoum was a flourishing province many hundred years before Joseph's time, to which I shall presently allude. It does not, however, follow that Joseph had nothing to do with perfecting the irrigation works connected with the river which is called after him. There is generally some foundation for names and traditions of this sort; and it is probable that the Israelites—who were not slow to discover the most available spots for their industry—when they came to Egypt settled at some subsequent period in the Fayoum as well as in Goshen; for it is said of the children of Israel after Joseph's death, that they "multiplied and waxed exceeding mighty, and the land was filled with them."

Indeed, Leo Africanus says, in his description of this locality,—

"The ancient city was built by one of the Pharaohs on an elevated spot, near a small canal from the Nile, at the time of the exodus of the Jews, after he had afflicted them with the drudgery of hewing stones, and other laborious employments," thus establishing a connection between the Jews and the Fayoum; though I think there can be no doubt that the ancient city, the remains of which still strew the neighbourhood, existed here long anterior to the period of the Jewish exodus.

Before, however, entering upon a description of the antiquities of the Fayoum, it may be interesting to note the modern aspect of the province and its capital. There can be no doubt that in ancient days the cultivable area of the oasis was much greater than it is at present, as the indications of a town and irrigation works near the ruins of Kasr Kharoon, at the southwestern extremity of the Birket el Kurûn, where it is now a desert, abundantly testify. At the present day it measures twenty-three miles north and south, and twenty-eight miles east and west. The town of Medinet el Fayoum is situated on a plateau which is about the same level as the Nile. From here the country trends rapidly to the Birket el Kurûn, which is, according to Linant, 94 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, thus falling about 170 feet in fifteen miles. The Birket el Kurûn is a lake of brackish water, about thirty-five miles long and seven broad; and into this drain fall the waters of the Bahr Youssef, after they have fertilised the whole area of the province. The result is, that the country is intersected by numerous more or less swiftly-running streams which, cutting through the soft soil, often form little gorges of great beauty and luxuriance, as at the

village of Fidimin, where they overflow their dams in cascades—a scenic feature unknown in any other part of Egypt. Where these dams exist there are often little lakes, embowered in palm-groves and gardens, thus giving the Fayoum a pre-eminence, so far as beauty of landscape is concerned, over every other part of the country. Strabo was evidently much struck with the exceptional fertility and beauty of the Fayoum.

"The Arsinoite Nome," he says in his account of the Nomes of Egypt, "is the most remarkable of all, both on account of its scenery and its fertility and cultivation. For it alone is planted with large, perfect, and richly productive olive-trees; and the oil is good when carefully prepared. Those who are neglectful may, indeed, obtain oil in abundance, but it has a bad smell. In the rest of Egypt the olive-tree is never seen, except in the gardens of Alexandria, where, under favourable circumstances, they yield olives, but no oil. Vines, corn, podded plants, and many other products, also thrive in this district in no small abundance."

Olive-oil seemed to hold an exceptionally high rank in the estimation of the old historian; but persons of other tastes will find here in the season a profusion of figs, oranges, apricots, and other fruits, which will equally justify the reputation of the province for productiveness. Twenty years ago its beauty was even greater than it is now. The gardens which had made it celebrated throughout Europe had latterly gradually been allowed to run waste, owing to the extreme severity of the taxation with which this province was afflicted during the *régime* of the late Khedive. The peasants were thus impoverished to such an extent that the province stood a fair chance of being ruined, and its fertility destroyed, when the change of govern-

ment took place under which it has begun to prosper with surprising rapidity. Unfortunately, one of its main and most attractive staples of industry has been destroyed, through no fault, however, of the Government. Fifteen years ago Medinet was surrounded by fields of roses, covering hundreds of acres; and the inhabitants drove a profitable trade by the sale of attar of roses. During the rose season the town was the most fragrant residence in Egypt. Unfortunately, the rose-trees were attacked by a malady which has entirely ruined the industry; and although efforts have since been made to renew it, they have hitherto been without success. Sugar and cotton are now the principal products of the province; and fields of beans, lentils, wheat, and other cereals stretch in all directions as far as the eye can reach.

According to tradition, the Arsi-noite Nome contained in former days 366 towns and villages, which, even supposing its limits to have far exceeded those which now exist, seems an over-estimate. The present population is probably about 150,000 souls, of whom 9000 live in the chief town. This, after establishing ourselves in the quarters which had been kindly provided for us, we lost no time in exploring.

It is the habit of dragomans to lay in large supplies of food for the tourists they nurse in the East. As, however, we had carefully avoided providing ourselves with that functionary, and had decided upon living upon the food of the country, with the aid of a single servant* and our own culinary acquirements, it became important to discover what meat and vegetables were furnished by the bazaar. This

consists of a long narrow street, for the most part covered over in the usual way, and extremely characteristic and oriental in its aspect. At one place the Bahr Youssef runs under it, but there is nothing to suggest that we are on a bridge, as it is completely built over with shops. For the benefit of future travellers, who want to know what they may depend upon finding in an ordinary Arab town of this description, I may say that the staple of food are beans and lentils,—the latter making a most excellent *purée*, and the former, when eaten very young, almost equalling peas. Onions, yams, spinach, and *okra* are abundant; rice and potatoes rare. Native bread, made from the country wheat, would be good, were it not rather sour; but we used to make soda-cakes; and after some trouble, discovered a mill at which maize could be ground rough instead of fine. This enabled us to have hominy, which, eaten with rich cream, makes a delicious substitute for porridge. The land flows with milk and honey, and there is no lack, therefore, of butter and cream-cheeses. Beef is not procurable; the mutton is bad, generally suspiciously pervaded with the flavour of goat; chickens are cheap and abundant—four dozen eggs can be bought for a shilling; and pigeons are eightpence a-pair. Fish in great quantities are brought from the Birket el Kurûn, resembling, generally, very large carp. There is a prejudice against them, and it is said they give fever; but I thought them excellent. Teal and wild duck occasionally come into the market, and cost about sixpence apiece. They are caught by the hunter putting his head in a cala-

* For the benefit of any of my readers who propose visiting Egypt, I cannot too highly recommend this man, whose name is Mohamet Achmet, as a servant. He is also qualified to act as a dragoman.

bash and wading out, accompanied by some tame ducks as decoy; he then scatters food on the water, and when the wild ducks come to feed round him, gently draws them under water with his hand. As they always have a sentinel out, it is necessary in approaching them to dispose of this gentleman first. The flock, not noticing his disappearance, and completely off their guard, may then be easily got at.

From all this it will appear that it was our own fault if we failed to have proper nourishment at Fayoum. I vainly tried one day to add to our larder with an extemporised fishing-rod and a worm; but beyond a dozen small creatures, which collectively weighed about a pound and a half, I extracted nothing from the most tempting-looking pools under the water-wheels: and as the cook declined to cook them, on the ground that they were unwholesome, I was discouraged from any further effort. A more profitable occupation was to wander over the ruins of the ancient city of Crocodilopolis Arsinoë; and this was a never-ending source of interest and amusement. The high mounds of *débris*, which cover an immense area of ground, were scarcely a mile from our abode, and consist of an enormous accumulation of potsherds, bones, bricks, rags, fibre, and dust. The highest mound is fifty feet above the level of the plain, and its summit commands a panoramic view of the whole of the province.

It is impossible to describe the rich and glowing beauty of the sunsets I have seen from this spot. The extraordinary clearness of the atmosphere brought out, with the utmost distinctness, the most distant outline. In the far east one could see the forms of the desert ranges beyond the Nile, faintly blushing in the last rays of the sun.

Nearer still, are the sand-hills of the desert on this side of the river, with the Pyramids of Howara and Illahoon standing out conspicuously; then succeeds a carpet of cultivation, to the brilliant green of which the more sombre hues of the palm-groves furnish a fitting contrast; amidst all this luxuriance water is sparkling and winding everywhere. In the extreme western distance we catch glimpses of "the Lake of the Horn," lying in the shadow of the Libyan hills; while in the immediate foreground the quaint cemetery and mud-houses of Medinet el Fayoum, which crown the high banks of the Bahr Youssef, so uncouth and barbarous looking at other times, are now all melted into a confused haze, as the sun setting behind the town throws it into a bluish-purple shadow, from which shoot here and there a minaret or a palm-tree. After we have feasted our eyes with the view from the top of the mound, we go down to see what is to be discovered at the bottom of it. We find on one side that it is scarped and perfectly precipitous, and that it is apparently a huge heap of *débris*, in which the pottery, bones, rags, straw, and date-fibre are packed in layers looking like strata. In places we see cropping out the remains of old brick walls, still standing wedged in the mound; here and there they are undermined by the labours of the peasants, who come and scoop out the dust of ages which fills these old chambers, and in which the pottery and bones are embedded. This they sift and carry off to put upon their fields as manure. It is a fine impalpable powder, which gets into one's nose and eyes, and penetrates into the innermost recesses of one's garments; nevertheless we revel in it for the sake of the treasures which it may contain. Here at the base of the mound we

observe a protruding skull, with short curly hair still clinging to it. We make an Arab manure-sifter exhume the mortal remains, and find clinging to the legs the wrap-pages of coarse linen, in which the whole body was once swathed: the skin is tightly drawn over the ribs, but none remains on the face. As we grub in the cloud of dust raised by this operation, we come across lumps of soft yellow stuff, which turns out to be mummy-cloth of a finer texture. Meantime another Arab triumphantly hands us a piece of *papyrus*, which he has found somewhere else, and on which, in spite of its tattered condition, we can make out some Arabic letters, of the style used in the first century of the Hejira, containing an invocation to Allah, which shows that it cannot be above twelve hundred years old,—a comparatively modern relic, which we treat with contempt while grubbing amid the remains of the twelfth dynasty. At the same time, we cannot flatter ourselves that what we do discover dates back beyond the Roman, or, at most, the Ptolemaic period. In the course of five or six walks which we took over these ruins, we picked up ourselves seven coins, of which four were of the reigns of Vespasian, Diocletian, Constantine, and Trajan. One was a curious Cufic coin; and we procured about a dozen more from the Arabs, most of which were undecipherable, but those we made out were also Roman. Some of the pottery was of a blue, green, or yellow glaze, the colours remarkably brilliant; but unfortunately we only found it in fragments. Pieces of glass bottles were common; and I picked up one perfect little phial of iridescent glass, used by the sympathetic ancients to contain tears. Beads were comparatively abundant, and we made quite an assortment of them. There were

numerous fragments of glass bracelets, unfortunately none perfect. From the appearance and shape of the broken *amphora*, which lay strewn around in great profusion, they must have been of a great size; and from one spot we may look over hundreds of acres of this shattered ware, testifying to the extensive use of pottery by the ancients. I pulled out several large pieces of coloured cloth from the base of this cliff of projecting *débris*, a hand-broom made of date-fibre, and a key of curious shape, heavily oxidised. From the great quantities of slag lying about in parts of these ruins, it would seem as though the city had been subjected at some time to the action of fire; and large fragments of blue glass were to be found which had evidently undergone a process of fusing. These, however, may have been the runnings from the glass furnaces. It is worthy of note, nevertheless, that a tradition exists among the Copts, of the city having been burnt by a besieging army, who tied torches to the tails of cats and drove them into the town.

The Arab diggers, who live in huts in the neighbourhood of these ruins, occasionally pick up valuable antiquities; but they are too ignorant to know their worth, and it is painful to think how many objects of interest they must smash in the course of their excavations for manure-dust. As it is, when they want to build, they come here for bricks which have stood the test of centuries; and I saw one man loading his donkey with large sun-dried bricks, twenty inches long by nine wide, which he was picking out of a wall just showing through the mound. In one part of these ruins there are numbers of chambers, built of crude brick, in a very fair state of preservation; and it was in these that I found most of the

beads and coins. Besides bricks and pottery, one now and then stumbles across a small piece of marble carving, or some larger fragments of granite columns. In looking over these chambers and mounds, we can trace the difference between the Roman and Egyptian periods. We see on the surface the strewn pottery, glass-ware, and coins of the later time, with here and there a few burnt bricks, which were most probably Roman, as the Egyptians rarely used them; but as we get lower down in our examination of the scarped cliff of *débris*, we come upon all the evidences of Egyptian structure, with bones and mummy-cloth more abundant, and thicker layers of straw or fibre. It was from the bottom of the cliff that I pulled out a fragment, at least a foot square, of what must have been an ancient Egyptian fishing-net. The crude brick walls which crop out from the base of these mounds, and over which probably a later town was built, are sometimes curved or waving in their construction. The whole description answered exactly to that given by Sir Gardner Wilkinson, who says:—

“The use of crude bricks baked in the sun was universal throughout the country, for private and for many public buildings; and the dry climate of Egypt was particularly suited to those simple materials. They had the recommendation of cheapness, and even of durability; and those made 3000 years ago, whether with or without straw, are even now as firm and fit for use as when first put up in the reigns of the Amenophis and Thotines, whose names they bear. When made of the hill-mud or alluvial deposit, they required straw to prevent their cracking; but those formed of clay (now called *haybeh*) taken from the torrent beds on the edge of the desert, held together without straw; and crude brick walls frequently had the additional security of a layer of reeds

or bricks, placed at intervals to act as binders. The courses of bricks were also disposed occasionally in horizontal curves, or a succession of concave and convex lines, throughout the length of the wall; and this undulating arrangement was even adopted in stone, especially in quays by the river-side.”

The modern cemetery of Medinet el Fayoum, with its picturesque tombs, is placed amid these ruins at the point where they most nearly approach the town.

The Egyptian monarch whose name is most intimately associated with this province, and to whom it probably owed, in the first instance, its development into a region of exceptional fertility, was Amenemhat the Third, who reigned in Egypt about 3000 years before Christ, and 600 years, therefore, before the arrival of Joseph in the country. In those days Egypt was called “the Land of Khemi,” the “Ham” of the Bible, or “the Black Country”—a name derived from the blackness of the soil. Amenemhat seems to have had a great talent for engineering, and for irrigating this black soil in the most effective manner. It is almost beyond a doubt that he it was who led the Bahr Youssef through the Libyan hills, and formed the vast reservoir of Lake Mœris; for the Greeks called him Ameris, believing that the Lake Mœris, which they regarded as a marvel of engineering skill, was called after him. The word *meri*, however, is Egyptian for “lake.” On its margin was situated the famous Labyrinth, which I afterwards visited; and here blocks of stone have been found bearing the name of Amenemhat. This lake extended to the city, the ruins of which I have just described, and which in those days was called Shat, or Pi-Sebek, “the abode of Sebek;” and it was the headquarters of the

worship of the sacred Crocodile, kept in Lake Mœris, — hence the name by which this city was afterwards known, of Crocodilopolis. Sebek is the name of the Egyptian god, who is always represented with the head of a crocodile; and that reptile was held especially sacred to him in the Arsinoëteia and several other nomes. He was by no means generally worshipped, however; indeed a certain Typhonic or infernal character was attributed to him. And this was specially the case in the adjoining Heracleopolitan nome, where the inhabitants worshipped the ichneumon, the greatest enemy of the crocodile; and it was their hatred which finally caused the destruction of the Labyrinth.

One of the most interesting antiquities, however, discovered in the Fayoum, is the head of one of the Hyksos, or shepherd-kings. From the discoveries recently made at San, the Greek Tanis, and the Biblical Zoan, which they made their capital, and which was also the chief city of the land of Goshen, there can be little doubt that these conquerors of Egypt were a Semitic race from the East, and it is not impossible that among their kinsfolk were Abraham and Sarah, whose sojourn in the country forms the earliest notice of it to be found in the Bible; more especially as it will be remembered that Hagar, the patriarch's second wife, and his daughter-in-law, Ishmael's wife, were both Egyptians. They ruled over the land for nearly four centuries and a half, while the exiled royal race took refuge in Upper Egypt. They adopted the style, language, religion, arts, and writing of the conquered country, and according to Dr Brugsch, it was under the reign of the Hyksos Pharaoh Nub, B.C. 1730, that Joseph was sold into Egypt; and

during the reign of his successor, Apopi, that he rose to honour, and that the famine took place which brought Jacob and his family to Egypt, and which is mentioned on a tomb at El Kab. The tomb belonged to the father of Aahmes, a naval officer who took part in the expulsion of the Hyksos—an event which, as Joseph lived to the age of a hundred and ten years, must have occurred before his death. It runs thus: "When a famine prevailed for many years, then I gave the city corn during each famine." As we learn from the Biblical record that "Pharaoh made Joseph ruler over all the land of Egypt" during these years, it is evident that the father of Aahmes must have been one of his subordinate officers.

The accounts given of the methods to which Joseph resorted during these seven years of famine for supplying the necessities of the whole population of Egypt, whom he ultimately caused to sell all their lands to Pharaoh, reserving only those belonging to the priests, clearly warrant the inference that the Fayoum, which was the most fertile portion of it, must have come under his special notice as a granary. And the tradition that he was buried there may have a foundation in fact. The sacred historian is careful to tell us that when Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old, "they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt." There is, indeed, every reason to suppose that so great a benefactor to the country, and a man who had filled such high office, was honoured with a tomb worthy of his greatness. And although we are informed that at the exodus Moses took his body to Palestine, the substantial character of these monuments makes it not impossible that his place of sepulture, and pos-

sibly a statue representing him, may yet be discovered in Egypt, and that the most likely place to find it would be the Fayoum.

Like the Hyksos conquerors themselves, it is probable that Joseph identified himself with the religion and customs of the Egyptians. We learn that Pharaoh "gave him to wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-pherah, priest of On." Potiphe-ra means "dedicated to Ra," or "the sun." In other words, his father-in-law was a priest of the temple at Heliopolis. The Hyksos themselves seem to have been Baal-worshippers before coming to Egypt, but to have compromised with their consciences by applying the name of the Egyptian god Set to their own gods (Baalim). This has given rise to the notion that the Hyksos may have been of Phœnician origin, while others think they were tribes from the Arabian desert. There are many circumstances strongly conducing to this conclusion, though the three heads in the Boulak Museum, the features of which show remarkable power, are not, it must be admitted, of a marked Semitic type. But the advice Joseph gave to his father and brethren before they asked permission of the shepherd-king to allow them to settle in Egypt, has a most significant bearing upon their dynastic appellation. "When Pharaoh," he says, "shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation? then ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we and also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians." Now Tanis, which the Hyksos kings had made their capital, was in the land of Goshen. Joseph, no doubt, resided in it, and he wished his kindred to be settled near him. He therefore

appeals to the weak side of the shepherd-king, who is himself Semitic and not Egyptian by race, and gives as a reason why they should live near the capital, where, doubtless, the conquering Semitic population preponderated, that they are shepherds, and that they would probably be ill-treated by the Egyptians, who abominate shepherds, if they went beyond the immediate protection of the ruling centre.

Pharaoh is apparently completely won over by the sympathy thus established of identity of occupation, and probably of race. He gives them the choice of the whole country to settle in; and tells Joseph to choose from his brethren "men of activity to rule over his cattle." It is evident, then, that the Israelites were in high favour at this time; but a change must have taken place in their circumstances almost immediately afterwards, when Aahmes or Amosis, the first king of the eighteenth dynasty, defeated the army of the Hyksos, consisting, according to Manetho, of 24,000 men, took their capital, and drove a large proportion of them out of Egypt, most of them retreating to Palestine, where they finally settled, and, according to some authorities, founded Jerusalem. Those who remained, however, were subjected to great persecution, in which the Israelites, who as Semites had been identified with them, shared. Their sojourn is said by St Paul to have lasted four hundred years; and the explanation of their having multiplied during that period into a nation of 600,000 souls, may perhaps be found in the fact that they had mingled and become identified with those of the Hyksos Semites that remained. Indeed it is recorded that when they left Egypt "a mixed multitude went up also with them."

In opposition to the theory that I have here enunciated, and which is advocated by many eminent Egyptologists, in regard to the date of the arrival of Joseph in Egypt, and the period of the sojourn of the Israelites, it is only right to say that it is a point which is still open to discussion, and that such men as Bunsen and Lepsius maintain widely opposite opinions. Bunsen holds that the family of Jacob came to Egypt in the reign of Sesertesen (Sesostris), about 2650 years before Christ; and since he agrees with Lepsius in placing the exodus in the reign of Menepthah, he allows an interval of 1440 years to elapse between Joseph and the exodus, or more than fourteen centuries. Lepsius, however, enters upon an elaborate and most carefully digested argument to prove that only about 90 years intervened from the entrance of Jacob to the exodus of Moses, and about as much from the entrance of Abraham into Canaan to Jacob's exodus; so that from Abraham to Moses only about 180, or, if we wish to make the most of it, 215 years passed, which alone, according to this calculation, are reckoned from Abraham to Jacob. Josephus maintains that the Hyksos were the Jews; and it is a curious fact that the Hyksos reigned in Egypt exactly 430 years, the period mentioned in Exodus as that of the sojourn of the children of Israel in Egypt; but Josephus dates his 430 years from the arrival of Abraham in Egypt, and leaves 215 years as the period intervening between Joseph and Moses. Now we know by the genealogies that Moses was the grandson of Levi by his mother Jochebed,* and therefore the grand-nephew of Joseph. Levi, who was Jacob's third son, must have been

a middle-aged man when he came to Egypt, as we are told that Joseph was thirty when his brethren arrived. He died when he was a hundred and thirty-seven years old. Moses was eighty years old when he led the children of Israel out of Egypt. In order to make up the 215 years of Josephus, we should have to suppose that Levi had been seventy years in the country, and was therefore probably about a hundred and twenty years old when Jochebed was born, and that she was sixty-five years old when she conceived Moses—both somewhat extreme assumptions. Under no circumstances, without a miracle, such as took place in the case of Sarah, can we stretch the period to the 430 years of the exodus, or the 400 of St Paul. It is worthy of note that, according to the Septuagint, the period of 430 years is not calculated from the entry of Jacob and his family, but from the entrance of Abraham into Canaan. It reads thus: "Now the dwelling of the children of Israel, which they dwelt in the land of Egypt *and in the land of Canaan*, was 430 years;" but it is difficult to extend the generations from Abraham to Moses, even to that extent. The whole subject is encompassed with difficulty. As a contemporary record, the account which Manetho gives of the exodus is full of interest, as containing the Egyptian version of the expulsion of the Lepers, as he calls the Jews; and indeed he insinuates that they had become a public nuisance, not only from the disease which was prevalent among them, but from the hold they had got upon the country, and their ever-increasing influence and possessions in it.

Egyptologists generally seem agreed that it was under the reign

* Exodus vi. 20.

of Rameses the Great that Moses was born; and it is an interesting fact that the second court of the Temple of Abydos furnishes us with the name of the daughter of Pharaoh who found him in the bulrushes. All the names of the daughters of Rameses are inscribed there, and that of the eldest bears so close a similarity to the name furnished by Josephus, allowing for the Greek termination which he uses, as to leave no moral doubt as to their identity. The name given by Josephus is Mautaretis; that inscribed in the chamber of Abydos is Maut-Art, or the great mother—thus furnishing a curious confirmation of the truth of the narrative. According to the fragment of Manetho, Moses passed the early part of his life as a priest in the temple dedicated to the worship of the sun at Heliopolis. The notice is curious and runs as follows: "It is said that a priest who founded their (the Jews') polity and laws—a Heliopolitan by race, named Osarsiph—when he went over to this nation from the service of the god Osiris in Heliopolis, received a change of name and was called Moses." I have already alluded to Joseph's connection with the same temple; and it is not unlikely that during the whole of this time the Israelites had, to some extent, conformed to the religion of the country with which both Joseph and Moses were so intimately associated, and in which the latter, with his great talents, had probably distinguished himself by his priestly learning. Indeed it would seem as though his theology, even after he became lawgiver to the Israelites, had been imbued with this early training. It is a singular and interesting fact that we find much of it embodied in the early funereal *papyri*. Thus the departed soul, pleading his justifi-

cation before Osiris, recounts the temptations he has resisted in such words as these: "I have not committed murder; I have not stolen; I have not committed adultery; I have not removed my neighbour's landmark, nor caused him to shed tears,"—and so on, developing a moral code of a very high order. It was as a general, however, that Moses rose to the highest distinction; for Josephus tells that he was placed by Rameses in command of the Egyptian armies in Ethiopia, where he waged a successful war, and married the daughter of the king whom he had conquered, returning to Egypt in the reign of Meneptah. He was thus a man of varied experience, of great learning, and of high position in Egypt when he was compelled to flee to Midian, returning at the age of eighty, eminently qualified by the training he had undergone for the functions he was then called upon to fulfil.

It was under Meneptah the Second that the exodus took place, about the year B.C. 1325. He does not seem to have perished in the Red Sea, though, according to the song of Moses, his horse was lost. His tomb is at Thebes, in the Babel Molook, immediately behind that of Rameses the Great. At the same time, this does not furnish absolute proof that he was placed in it, as the Egyptian kings used to commence to build their tombs when they began to reign. I have been led by the discovery of the head of a Hyksos king in the Fayoum, and the traditional connection of Joseph with that province, into a digression which only belongs to it in so far as it goes to establish the possibility of his tomb being here, and to confirm the impression, also evidently entertained by Leo Africanus, that the Jews were settled here, as well as in the

land of Goshen, as it must have been for more than 400 years under Semitic rule.

The oasis is next mentioned in the days of Osorkon the First, of the twenty-second dynasty, when Crocodilopolis was so embellished and extended by that monarch, that it was called "the city of Osorkon" in the celebrated *stele* of Piankhi. This Osorkon was the Zerah of the Bible, who invaded Palestine with an army of a million of men, and was defeated by Asa. He lived about 950 years before Christ. Seven hundred years after this Crocodilopolis lost its uncouth name, and Ptolemy Philadelphus bestowed upon it the more euphonious appellation of Arsinoë, after his wife, and the "Land of the Lake" became "the Arsinoite Nome." One of the modern names for Medinet el Fayoum is Medinet el Faris, or "the City of the Horseman or Knight;" and these ruins, after having been called successively Pi-Sebek, Crocodilopolis, and Arsinoë, are known in the present day to the natives as Kom Faris. The most perfect relics of the magnificence of this once rich and populous city are to be found in the mosque of Kait Bey, which spans the Bahr Youssef, at the point where it finally emerges from the town, and which is itself a most picturesque ruin, about 400 years old. It has long since lost its roof, and from its centre, by the side of a well with an old stone basin, rise two tall date-trees; but the marble and granite columns, with their Corinthian capitals, which are all still standing, came from Arsinoë. There are two small fluted marble columns near the pulpit, which are particularly delicate and beautiful. The pulpit itself is an elaborate work of arabesque, inlaid with ivory. On the bridge in front of this mosque are the remains of an

old wall; and the view of the Bahr Youssef, seen through the crumbling arches, as it winds away under the date-trees which fringe its banks, when the women are filling their water-jars, is one of the most striking views in the town, and equalled only, perhaps, by one a little further on, where there is another old mosque, also roofless, and also ornamented with columns plundered from Arsinoë, which stands on the brink of the river, and is irresistible in its situation and picturesque decay, from an artistic point of view. Indeed our walks and rides about Fayoum were being perpetually interrupted by the charming studies for the pencil which they presented; and we spent half our time squatting on heaps of brickbats, surrounded by admiring crowds of women and children, in the attempt to carry away in our sketch-books reminiscences of the scenes which it afforded us so much enjoyment to discover. One of the most characteristic and interesting of these was the fair, which takes place every Tuesday, when a large proportion of the country population flock to Medinet, to buy and sell produce. There must have been nearly 2000 people assembled on the large open space outside the town, on the day that we visited it. In one quarter were collected all the camels, buffaloes, oxen, donkeys, and sheep, that were for sale. Down the centre of the most crowded part a temporary street of canvas-booths had been erected, where Manchester goods were temptingly displayed; here the country-women were chaffering for the blue cotton, of which their garments are made; Bedouins from the neighbourhood of the Birket, with their independent swagger, were supplying themselves with cooking utensils in the quarter devoted to copper and brass ware;

there were Copts, with quite a different cast of countenance, and crushed and downcast manner, haggling and bargaining, with the facility of getting the best of it which is peculiar to them. Here was a man blowing a trumpet as an invitation to a peep-show; there a *crétin*, with receding skull, epileptic tremor, and idiotic stare, receiving the homage of the unsophisticated *jellahin*, who kissed his hand as a tribute to his infirmity. Altogether it was an insect, odoriferous, screaming, wrangling, jostling throng, to shoulder one's way amongst. There was no mistake about the oriental flavour, in more senses than one. And the satisfaction of our curiosity and interest involved a certain sacrifice of personal comfort, as we came to discover afterwards, during an arduous and protracted effort to reduce the numbers of the hopping mementoes of our visit.

Mere existence, and, much more, sight-seeing, in Egypt, involves a perpetual struggle with fleas; and one goes into a crowd with about the same shiver of reluctance that one would feel before taking a plunge into the Serpentine in the depth of winter. These were our sensations one Sunday when we determined to attend service in the Coptic church. We were escorted thither by some of the leading members of the community, who are largely employed here, as elsewhere in Egypt, as clerks in the public offices—writers, accountants, and so forth. The church was a square building, supported by eight columns, and divided by two screens running across it longitudinally. Behind one, which was of open arabesque work, sat the women by themselves. In the centre the male congregation for the most part squatted on their heels; but there were two rows of chairs in front

provided for the more aristocratic portion of the congregation, where we were furnished with seats. Immediately in front of us was an opaque screen, ornamented with rude Scripture pictures, and consisting of inlaid ebony and ivory, which divided us from the apse. In the middle of it was an opening through which was visible the altar, a massive brick erection, upon which a sheep might have been conveniently sacrificed. It was now covered with a curtain, upon which the Coptic cross with its peculiar pendent squares, was designed. In the centre of it was the case, also covered, which contained the chalice. In the midst of the congregation was a reading-desk, from which two of the deacons read the liturgy, alternately in Coptic and Arabic. This was removed before the service was completed. The congregation, which was composed of four or five hundred persons, was decidedly irreverent; there was a constant movement of places and subdued conversation going on all the while that the priests were intoning the service in the rapid nasal voice peculiar to them. It was a form which apparently had to be got through by the priests in as little time as possible, and by the people with no attention whatever. The sacrament was celebrated by a priest in a white surplice embroidered with gold, but who, according to invariable usage, was barefoot. When the celebration began we were allowed to take off our shoes and take a couple of chairs into the apse and seat ourselves beside the altar. There were besides ourselves and the priest two or three youths, apparently neophytes, and three little boys leaning over the altar opposite the celebrant, one to fan the flies off, and the others to chant responses: at the door to the apse was a man

swinging incense. Four candles were burning on the altar, and a very old chandelier hung from the roof. During the whole time that the priest chanted the service he held extended in either hand a square piece of richly embroidered cloth, emblazoned with the cross and sundry Coptic devices. The bread, on which was stamped a cross, consisted of a substantial cake, something like a hot cross bun, and when the priest took it we were each handed one, apparently as a keepsake. Having broken it into a glass saucer and elevated it before the congregation, he uncovered the wine, dipped his finger into it and crossed the bread. He then commenced to partake of the bread, giving it at the same time to a young man by his side and to a child about seven years old, who walked incessantly round the altar with a candle in his hand and a square embroidered cloth held to his mouth. Every time he passed the priest he stopped, received a mouthful, and then started off again with the cloth held tightly to his mouth, continuing his walk until the bread was finished. I asked a young Copt the meaning of this child's performances, and he said he was, "like Samuel, training for the priesthood from his infancy." All this time, when the priest was not intoning, a group of four boys outside in the church were chanting the responses in Arabic, in a loud discordant key, in alternation with those within the apse, who chanted in Coptic. It was a wild Arabic cadence, which sounded strangely in connection with a Christian service, and with the constantly recurring refrain of "Kyrie Eleison." When the bread and wine were disposed of, and the vessels divested of the last crumb and drop, the chalice was filled with water and handed

to us, so that we, together with those so minded, might partake of it. After the service was over we adjourned to an enclosed court outside the church where there was a *divan*, and where we were regaled with coffee and cigarettes, and introduced to the old priest who had officiated, and who had so gentle and winning an expression of countenance, that I was led to hope that his religion consisted of something beyond the forms I had been witnessing. There is a small Roman Catholic Church in Medinet, which we also visited, and where an Italian *curé*, who was unfortunately absent, officiates to a congregation of about fifty persons, mostly converts or their descendants. He is the only European permanently resident in the place. The Protestant American Mission opened a school here not long ago; but it was so badly supported, and their efforts met with so little success, that it was abandoned after a short time.

The Copt population of the province of Fayoum is about 5000; of these a large proportion are *fellahin*. Those in the town, as I have already said, are for the most part Scribes, and after going to their church, I am inclined to think may also be Pharisees. During our stay in the Fayoum we saw a good deal of the *mudir* or governor, and one or two of the other officials, to whom we were much indebted for various acts of kindness. For the last ten years the Fayoum has been administered with marked success by the present governor, who has, in consequence, held his position for an almost unprecedented length of time. The mode of administering an Egyptian province is in some respects patriarchal. The *mudir* is, or should be, easy of access to the humblest *fellah*; and if he is a capable man, can exercise the func-

tions of a benevolent despot without let or hindrance. On the other hand, the power thus at his disposition may easily be, and often is, abused. Once a week the sheikhs of villages used to congregate in the avenue leading to the Government offices. As a rule, they were tall handsome men, and formed striking groups, in their black flowing *abeih's*, beneath which the white under-garment folded across the chest shows in strong and harmonious contrast. With all these men the governor was in direct and constant contact, and was thus in a position to know the exact condition of every village in his *mudirate*. Sometimes he would address them collectively, after receiving their various reports; and on occasions of disputes or complaints, groups of the lowest class of *fellahin* might be seen waiting for their audience.

This same avenue was on certain days of the week the resort of numerous letter-writers, who, seated on the ground under the trees, would draw up petitions or write letters for those who could not do so for themselves; here, too, were pitched the tents of the party who are making a cadastral survey of the province under Colonel Mason, to whose hospitality we were indebted for a tent on the first night of our arrival. As this avenue was also the approach to our own rooms, we were in a position to know pretty well what was going on generally. Nor was Fayoum without its dissipations. One evening we dined out and accomplished the feat of steadily wading with our

fingers, in the absence of plates or knives and forks, through fifteen elaborately cooked native dishes, which had been prepared in the harem by the ladies of our host, who were skilled in the culinary art. As the *plats* were not cooked dry, but consisted of cunningly prepared gravies and sauces, fingers seemed especially inadequate, even with the aid of bread, to secure satisfactory mouthfuls. However, as we had so many to do justice to, a little of each went a long way. Turkish and Arabic cookery errs perhaps on the side of being too greasy; but I confess I prefer it to any other, perhaps because I acquired the taste for it in my youth.

We had now pretty well exhausted the attractions of the town of Medinet, and determined to make some expeditions to such objects of interest in the Fayoum as were within our power. There was a prostrate obelisk and some curious ruins still to be seen within an easy distance of the town, but we had more especially set our hearts upon visiting the Pyramid of Howara, and the far-famed Labyrinth which, in the days of Herodotus, was numbered among the seven wonders of the world, and the ruins of which have lately been discovered by Linant Bey, upon the shores of the dried-up Lake Mœris. Indeed the two great attractions which had induced me to visit the Arsinoite Nome consisted in the prospect which it afforded of exploring the mysteries of the Labyrinth, and of fishing in the brackish waters of the Birket el Kurân.

MATTIE: THE HISTORY OF AN EVENING.

A DULL and tiresome October afternoon was passing away in what was too plainly a fit of the sulks, to admit of hopes being entertained, even by the most sanguine, that it would have any pleasant or inspiring termination.

Wednesday is not the worst day in the week for events to happen upon. There is no possible reason why a startling piece of news should not reach one's ear on a Wednesday—why a budget of interesting letters should not arrive by the post on a Wednesday—why an unexpected turn of good fortune should not befall one on a Wednesday; but somehow, upon this particular Wednesday, the idea of anything occurring to break the monotony of its wearisomeness seemed absolutely preposterous to one, at least, of the persons with whom we have to do,—the mistress of Castle Cairntree, a lonely mansion on the Scottish coast. Mrs Boscawen was an invalid, who, whatever she might have been in the bloom of her youth and health, was, with shattered nerves and impaired temper, susceptible of every outward influence, more especially when it was of a depressing or irritating nature. On the day in question, she was so much tormented by the ceaseless drone of the wind, varied as it was merely by the rattle of the passing showers which drifted from time to time overhead, that by five o'clock she was only anxious to get rid of the remaining daylight, and try what closed shutters, large fires, and candles could do towards restoring the aspect of things around her to that comfort which aided so materially her own cheerfulness.

The notion of comfort was certainly somewhat at variance with

the outward appearance of the thin grey tower with its modern wings, which, according to the fashion of the district, was dignified by the appellation of "Castle." There was little of grandeur, still less of beauty, in its appearance; the site was poor, the country around barren,—in short, the former laird, who had prided himself on the handsome manner in which he had restored and enlarged the old place, would have done his successors better service by razing it to the ground and building another in its stead. Draughty, troublesome, ill constructed, however, as the mansion was, it was endeared to its present owner by association and possession; and consequently, by the aid of thick curtains, double doors, carpets, and endurance, his wife contrived to exist, and even to be satisfied with her home. Her standing grievance—namely, her being unable to accompany her daughters into society—did not perhaps embitter her existence as much as she would fain have had it supposed that it did. To lie on her sofa in the little sitting-room which was the one really luxurious apartment in the house—to keep herself warm in winter and cool in summer—to trifle with her needlework, and dabble amongst her correspondence, with intervals of desultory chit-chat as her husband and children went in and out of the chamber,—this was the sort of routine which, to confess the truth, suited Mrs Boscawen to a hair's-breadth; and it was scarcely more from necessity than from predilection that she had softly, and by gentle gradations, sunk into it.

But then it was necessary to the preservation of her spirits and general equanimity, that the ma-

chinery of the family and household should work smoothly, that perplexities should not be allowed to embarrass, or vexations to annoy, —whilst, at the same time, agreeable interruptions were especially valued, as giving a fillip to the languid hours.

Whether the letter which was put into her hand as daylight waned on the day whose length and dreariness she had repeatedly bemoaned, was to prove a source of pleasure or of trouble, remained to be seen; but at the moment of receiving it, the lady was certainly roused to curiosity. More than curiosity, more than mere ordinary interest, was visible on the countenance of the tall girl by her side, whose eyes by turns regarded the sheet and perused the expression on her mother's face, and who betrayed by the varying colour in her cheek and by the nervous clasping and unclasping of her hands, a certain anxiety and agitation which she was endeavouring otherwise to conceal. Fortunately for the attempt she was not exposed to the scrutiny of a keen observer, for if Mattie's face had declared what was passing in Mattie's bosom, it would have been a sad piece of work. Mrs Boscawen would have jumped off her sofa in surprise and bewilderment, and the letter and all it contained—— But never mind, let us confine ourselves to what really did happen, and not fritter away our time in idle conjectures.

The weather having been so depressing, and the day monotonous to both mother and daughter, a little event out of the common, a trifling incident of this kind, was exactly the right thing, coming at the right time,—and at the first brush the parent appeared to be the more eager of the two in discovering its nature; but no sooner had the contents of the note been mas-

tered, and its object understood, than she relapsed into her usual state of nervous indecision and querulousness.

"I wish Adelaide or Julia were here," she said. "So tiresome of them to be out just when they are wanted. I knew something would be sure to happen when they were out of the way. It always does."

Her companion was silent.

"What o'clock is it, Mattie?"

"Nearly five, mamma."

"They will surely be here soon. But what is to be said? You see what your aunt wants—you to go there with the rest to-night, and take Douglas's place at the dinner-table. I suppose you will have to go. You would like to go?"

"Yes, mamma."

"Ridiculous to send over at such an hour; it gives one no time to consider——" The door opened. "What! An answer wanted?" exclaimed Mrs Boscawen, with the startled air of one unaccustomed to sudden demands. "But, Boyd, how can I send one? Stop a moment,—Mattie, speak; what is to be done?"

"What do you mean, mamma?" said her daughter, gently. "What is it that——"

"Don't you see, my dear? Boyd, *you* understand; Miss Adelaide is not come in yet; the man must wait."

"His orders is to be back immediately, ma'am. I don't think the young ladies can be in yet awhile, ma'am."

As he spoke, Boyd glanced at Miss Mattie, whose elder sisters were the delinquents, and whom he, in common with the rest of the household, had as yet scarcely learned to take into account. Only a few months before she had returned to them from her foreign school, almost a stranger; and in what ways, and to what extent, she

might be depended upon, had yet to be found out. Boyd himself had carried the fair maid in his arms as a baby, and was jealous as a parent of her dignity and her honour,—but he was not sure that she was to be trusted with the ink-bottle on the present occasion. Lady Turner, to whom a note had to be written, was a person of great importance to the Boscawen household; and Miss Mattie was just Miss Mattie, who never put herself forward, never was sent for when visitors were in the drawing-room, never was taken into council on any matter of consequence,—from whom, in short, nothing was expected but unobtrusive dutiful acquiescence in all things soever that might be ordained by the ruling powers.

As she stood meekly by, offering no suggestion, Boyd and his mistress alike debated what was to be done.

Mrs Boscawen was the first to speak, having naturally the most at stake; whatever Boyd might think, she was not going to get off her sofa and set herself to the task of writing, just when she was feeling particularly low, and nervous, and wretched,—startled, too—anything sudden was always so tiresome and startling. Mattie must surely be able to pen a few words that would not disgrace her—Mattie, on whose education so much had been spent, and who was, as it were, just off the irons. She felt, all at once, that it was foolish to have hesitated; and without permitting herself to reflect further, or even to consult the grey-headed dependant, who stood waiting, with her eye, observed decidedly, “Then, Mattie, my dear, you must go to the writing-table.”

She need not have feared, however, that any intervention would be offered. Boyd had come to the same conclusion as his mistress ere he respectfully withdrew; for al-

though he shook his head wisely outside the door, and prognosticated no great things of the performance now to be gone through, he felt that the emergency was extreme. The groom was impatient, the light was going: under such circumstances, and since—although he stopped at every window along the gallery to peer out, in hopes of seeing Miss Adelaide and Miss Julia—they were not anywhere in view, the risk must be run.

“Now, Mattie,” said her mother, brightening up in spite of herself at the novelty of the proceeding, “have you got proper paper? Don’t put too much on one page, my love; a note should never be compressed. And a few lines are all that is needed, just to say that my poor head is so bad to-day that I have made you my deputy-correspondent since your sisters are out; and——”

“Stop a moment, please, mamma.”

“Write it nicely, my dear; your aunt is a great observer of little things.”

“Yes, mamma. I am ready now.”

“Then you must thank her, and say I am very happy that you should accept her kind invitation. I cannot understand her asking you, nevertheless,” added Mrs Boscawen; “for certainly one of the young Hamiltons or Wrays would have filled Douglas’s place better than you. *You* cannot fill a man’s place. How can you hand—Well, well, I won’t speak; and it does not signify, either; it is your aunt’s own affair if her table is disarranged. How are you getting on, my love?”

How she was getting on the youthful scribe could scarcely tell herself. Pretty well, she thought. Her fingers might tremble, and her heart beat, but the page before her

was neither blotted nor blurred. With some complacency she surveyed the whole, ere she carried it to the sofa for inspection, and watched for the effect it would produce, much as she had been wont to anticipate the commendation so fair and even an exercise would have won at school.

It was this gentle glow of self-approval manifested in her daughter's countenance which checked the "My dear child!" just rising to the parent's lips.

She looked at Mattie, looked at the letter, and looked up again with a smile.

All at once the fair young face was suffused with colour. "Is it not right, mamma? Will it not do?"

"Well, my love, ye—es, it will 'do,' I daresay. It is not a *very* good note, you know, Mattie,—not like Adelaide's or Julia's notes; but your aunt will understand to make allowances, and perhaps she may not look at it much,"—turning the sheet over in her hands dubiously; then, with a start, "My child, you have spelt correspondent with one *r*!"

"Give it me, mamma, quick. I can put that in easily."

"Softly, my love; don't be in too great a hurry. Yes, you can slip it in very well in the corner—at least you must do it as well as you can; you would not like to write it over again? Come here, let me show you. All these little sentences at the end,—all this part—'Believe me, your affectionate niece, Matilda Boscawen,' should be in distinct short lines,—not running into one another as you have made them do. Do you understand? Then here again"—turning to the page before—"you should have begun afresh here—made a new start with a large *M*. A note or a letter ought not to be filled up like a copy-book. Of

course, I could not see to direct you in this respect; and the phrases are all very well,—you have said exactly what I told you; but these trifling points, the knowing where to stop and where to begin—and your lines should be a great deal further apart besides,—all this is of importance to the look of the thing. And let me tell you, my dear, that to write a good note should be one of a woman's chief accomplishments."

"But what *am* I to do?" sighed Mattie.

"Let it go for this time," unexpectedly rejoined her mother, who, having had the satisfaction of pointing out the defects, felt, as many other people would, that they were not worth further trouble. "Remember what I said for another occasion, my love; and now, ring for tea."

"I am to send this?"

"Dear me, yes, there is no help for it." Such relapses into fretfulness were not uncommon to the speaker. "It must go, I suppose. What are you doing now?"

"Directing the envelope, mamma."

"Is that still to be done? Then could you not just take out a fresh sheet, and—— But, no! I am so tired I really cannot go over it all again. No, I cannot look at the direction, my head aches too much. Take it down-stairs yourself, like a good child; and don't let me have Boyd fussing in and out of the room more than can be helped."

The door was scarcely heard to close behind the departing messenger, it slid so softly into its socket. But once outside, it was the flight of a terrified bird that brought Mattie to the bottom of the great staircase, across the hall, along the passages, till she found her object. Boyd, she guessed, would not be far to seek; and sure

enough, though her light footsteps left no sound, he caught the rustle of her dress, and emerged from a doorway, ere she had considered by what means to summon him.

The letter was now taken from Mattie's hands, and scarce a minute elapsed ere her listening ear caught the sound of a horse's hoofs pass beneath the window where she stood on the watch, and she saw the groom despatched by Lady Turner trot quickly out of sight.

A sigh of ecstasy burst from her lips. A wonderful, wellnigh impossible thing had come to pass. An event which she could not have stirred hand or foot to bring about, had been brought about for her. A mystery she could not fathom had been accomplished; a miracle had been wrought. All this, and nothing less, it seemed to this simple maiden, because the most ordinary common thing in the world had happened. What more natural than that her brother having failed, she should be summoned by her aunt to supply his deficiency? What more likely than that she should be permitted to do so? What need of this fear, this trepidation, this emotion on so trite a subject?

And why should Mattie care to go at all? The night was dark and wild—the circle at Lady Turner's would in all probability prove formal and unattractive,—formidable, moreover, to one so shy and unused to society. It would have been much more easily understood, much more in accordance with the young Matilda's character, if she had shrunk from and shunned the ordeal. It would,—and yet it had seemed as if her very heart would break if she had had to send a refusal. Underneath that passive exterior, veins were throbbing and swelling: that gentle acquiescence hid a passion of entreaty.

She had so envied the elder ones

who had been preferred before her, had so patiently borne her deprivation, and so proudly hidden her desire, that the present reaction was almost too much.

To none had a whisper of her secret been confided; and how childish would one and all have deemed her, knowing nothing,—how much, how infinitely worse than childish—a fool, a simpleton—had the truth come out?

That Frederick was to be there—the handsome, haughty, stiff-necked Fred, the pride and object and worry of his mother's life—the incomprehensible, unmanageable, unsusceptible cousin,—what should that have been to any of the fair Boscauens? They had been deeply annoyed,—at least Adelaide and Julia had, for the youngest sister knew nothing of such matters,—because a ridiculous rumour had got abroad, and been bandied from one to the other, founded on the mere fact of Frederick's having been seen galloping across the floating sands which lay between Rimmin and the Castle, whereas he ought to have gone round to his uncle's door by the road at the head of the bay. Suppose he had chosen the quickest path—suppose he were a dare-devil rider who risked his neck without much thought of its value—was that to say that he would not as readily have done the same had the dangerous route led him to any other goal? He had brought Mattie a fragment of pink sea-weed from the islet in the heart of the bay, and Mattie had taken it with a burst of tears.

This had been unfortunate, foolish. She had been spoken to, and told how absurd she was, and kept away from Rimmin strenuously from that time. She had also been tutored to avoid her cousin, to speak coldly to him, withdraw herself from his company when accident

brought him to the Castle, and in all respects show that what had so unluckily happened was merely the effect of the shock consequent on finding that any one—*any one*—had been so thoughtless, and had had so narrow an escape.

All this Mattie had done, and no further blame had in consequence attached itself to her.

But now Frederick was going away; and going, as she felt, under an impression so false, that if he left Rimmin at this time, according to his present intentions, all was over that ever might have been between them. Once, she had felt nearly sure she was beloved, but of late coldness had begotten coldness, and reserve, formality,—so that the alienation at length had become complete, and one at least had well-nigh despaired of anything ever happening to break it down. But might not Mattie have this one chance more? Might she not just see him, hear him, be in his presence once again?

The fiat went forth—"No." Adelaide and Julia alone accepted their aunt's hospitality, and not a word or sign gave the little sister when she heard it. Hard as her fate was, she had borne it bravely; but none the less had the disappointment been bitter, and to find herself once more, without act or effort of her own, within a few hours of meeting her cousin within his own halls, filled her with amazement and strange delight. No wonder that tremors had overrun her frame as she stood in patient silence during her mother's deliberation; Mattie could never speak, but she could keenly feel.

It was not the decision she had had to fear, however, it was the delay. And that we shall presently explain.

Mrs Boscawen, being precluded by the state of her health from

leaving her own apartments, had known nothing of what had passed between Frederick and his cousin. She saw Mattie gentle, quiet, composed as ever, and fancied that her youngest daughter, whose temper and disposition she had hardly so far had an opportunity of studying, was by nature silent and reserved, as she had certainly shown herself to be under the diligent supervision before mentioned. Since the parent had nothing whereof to complain, she asked no questions, and was vouchsafed no information, there being no occasion for her to be enlightened.

At least so thought Adelaide and Julia, and they had their own reasons for reticence. Frederick's gallantry had annoyed them to the full as much as had its effect upon their sister, and they had been even more out of temper with their friend and gossip, Norah Hamilton, than with either; for it was Norah who, referring to the foolhardy feat, had alleged that people "talked," and that it was given out everywhere that Sir Frederick was engaged to one of his cousins. This was the more provoking since there neither was, nor ever had been, any truth in such a statement, and the idea was repudiated with indignation,—but it was not repeated at home.

"Mattie would think it did not signify what people said," averred Julia.

"Mamma would show that there was something wrong before Aunt Caroline," added Adelaide.

"We should be prevented going to Rimmin ourselves," concluded both. And that settled the matter.

For they liked going to Rimmin very much, if not quite so much as Mattie did; and as they came home along the shore from their walk to the village on the afternoon in question, they were in high good-

humour at the prospect of spending the evening there. They had thought themselves obliged to go out, stormy as the weather was, alleging that a few little odds and ends of messages, trifles that were wanted by one and another, would not be properly attended to unless they took upon themselves the task. Mattie was no good; they did not think of asking her to undertake the business; and on no account would they have out a carriage, a carriage being needed so soon again. That is to say they wanted the walk to exhale some of their exuberant spirits, and to heighten the roses in their cheeks for the evening.

When Lady Turner's messenger arrived at the Castle it was not far from the hour when the return of the two might be looked for, and it was the knowledge of this which made all the time spent by Mrs Boscawen in considering the question, and pointing out the errors of Mattie's epistle, one of trial to her daughter. In every gust of wind she fancied she heard her sisters' footsteps at the door; and once admitted to the deliberation, their influence was everything with their mother. By intuition she knew what scale it would weigh down in the present instance, and that her chance might go to the winds once Adelaide raised her voice, or Julia her eyebrows.

But the note was written, and the man gone. Joy, joy! No one could now recall him; the walkers were coming from an opposite direction; and by the time they knew anything of the matter, the answer would be in her aunt's hands, and she might snap her fingers at all interference. But she must calm the flutter in her breath, and shade the light within her eye: none must suspect what she would hide, even from herself, if she could. At Rimmin all would be easy; she

was not afraid of betrayal once in Frederick's presence,—the very thought that he was near was enough to silence and to petrify,—but beforehand, an unguarded speech, a look of happiness, might attract fatal attention.

Mrs Boscawen, however, was still alone when Mattie returned to the boudoir.

"My tea, Mattie; I am so thirsty, child," she began, plaintively. "Your sisters really need not have stayed so long. It is past five now, and getting quite dark. I don't like their being out at this hour."

"It is only dark in this room, mamma; it is quite light outside."

"Adelaide will not have been able to match my wool, I am sure."

"I daresay she will; it is not a difficult blue to get."

"More difficult than you think; there are so many shades nowadays. I wish I had told her to bring another case of needles. If I should lose this needle to-night, I should not know what to do; it is my last; I have not another anywhere. Dear! how stupid of me not to think of that before, when she was actually going to the needle-shop! Now I shall have a whole evening doing nothing——"

"You must just not lose your needle, mamma," said Mattie, gaily. Poor child! She could not but be gay, do what she would. Everything was now in her eyes as bright as in her mother's all was sombre, and her conviction of the daylight's having lasted, and of her sisters' successful shopping, would have extended itself to further cheerfulness on any other subject started; she could not conjure up needles, but she could say, "you must just not lose yours," as though such words had a charm to retain it.

The invalid, however, was not to be beguiled from her mood.

"I do not drop it on purpose, my

dear. But you know what a sad helpless creature I am of an evening, when I have had all the worries of the day to go through; and if it should slip through my fingers, how am I to find it again? I cannot hunt it up myself, and Harrison has no eyes. If I send for her, it upsets me altogether. It is rather hard that I am to be left to Harrison alone for my entire evening.

This was to be expected; it was only wonderful that the prospective want of a companion during the hour which she spent in the sitting-room after dinner before retiring for the night, had not presented itself as a misery before.

"I had thought to have had you, at least," pursued Mrs Boscawen, in accents conveying, "You are not much, but still you are better than nothing." "I had been looking forward to hearing the end of the book Julia is reading to me. But I suppose, now that Douglas is gone, you will all three want to go everywhere. I shall have to give in, for I dislike, of all things, making myself a drag upon my children; but I must say, my hours of solitude are the most trying part of all my ill health."

"But, dear mamma, it happens so seldom that you have any. You know we hardly ever go out at all, and you have never once been without one of us before."

"You would not like it yourself, Mattie."

Mattie was silent, assiduously bending over the tea-table, and by-and-by the benign influence of a strong and steaming cup began to appear. "My head is really better," the invalid allowed, "and perhaps it was as well that the others did not come in till I could better bear their voices. Be sure you keep the teapot warm, Mattie; they will not like to find things uncomfortable."

"Mamma, there is a little rose in that glass,—it is not doing much good there——"

"Not doing much good?" said Mrs Boscawen, laughing. "What good should it do? What do you mean, child?"

"It would be just the thing for my hair to-night, if you do not want it very much."

"Is that it? No, I do not want it very much, at least I think I can exist without it, Mattie; bring the glass to me. Here," continued the speaker, raising herself on her elbow, "this pretty bunch of scarlet geranium, and that spray of jessamine, will suit you better than the rose. But we want some green; this piece of myrtle—I almost grudge the myrtle; but, however, it will not be wasted—take them now, my love; that is as pretty a bouquet as you could have."

"Thank you, thank you, mamma."

"I declare, you have quite a colour to-day, Mattie."

"Have I, mamma?"

"You are generally pale, and this morning I fancied you particularly pale; I wondered if your head, too, ached. Now go and dress, my dear, for you will want help, and there is not so very much time. Harrison can go to you first, so as not to interfere with your sisters."

They did not come in until the room had been silent for nearly a quarter of an hour. They had been round the garden and greenhouse after returning from their walk, having, like Mattie, a fancy for wearing natural flowers in their hair, and they now appeared laden with fresh-scented blossoms.

"Heliotrope, even," cried Julia, gaily. "I do think we manage well. Mamma, I would leave these with you, only I have nothing else to wear."

"I did remember some ferns for your glass, mamma," subjoined Adelaide. "Here they are. But where are all the flowers gone?" inquired she, in surprise. "They were only gathered this morning."

"A marauder has carried them off. If I had known you were going to the greenhouse, I might have waited to see what you brought in; but I gave them all to Mattie."

"To Mattie? What did Mattie want to do with them?"

"To wear them to-night, as you and Julia do."

"But Mattie is not going to-night, mamma."

"Indeed she is. A little event happened whilst you were out. Your aunt sent over a special messenger to invite her. She is wanted to fill Douglas's place at the dinner-table."

"And she is to go?" The voice was Adelaide's, but so changed was it from the jovial pleasantry of its tone on her first appearance, that it sounded in her mother's ears perfectly appalling. In an instant Mrs Boscawen took the alarm. She had done the wrong thing, and there was now no escape for her; instead of having the pleasure of recounting the details of the "little event"—instead of being able to dwell upon her difficulties in the matter of the note, on Lady Turner's civility, and the groom's impatience, with the unction of one who had not often the chance of being a narrator,—she was to be brought to the bar, and called on sharply for her defence.

In her confusion and astonishment the poor lady shuffled. "I did not like to refuse," she murmured, uneasily. "I—I really did not know what to say."

"Did you accept the invitation for her, mamma?" It was Julia whose accents now expressed, "Answer me that, without further circumlocution."

"I—— Well, I allowed her to write for herself."

"And to say she would go?"

"She said she would go. Yes."

A solemn silence ensued, during which the parent's heart quaked in spite of herself. She could not stand it. "If I had had a minute to think," her nervous apology ran, "if I had not been hurried so, I might have managed to hit upon some excuse. But the man was waiting, and Boyd insisted, and Mattie was no help to me one way or another. She never is, poor child. I was left entirely to myself; and yet I was told the answer must be sent immediately! It was all so quickly done,—in such a bustle. Why were you so late in coming home, you two? If you had only been here——"

"We could not tell that we should be wanted," said Adelaide, gloomily; "but I am sure I wish with all my heart we had been."

Then she glanced at Julia, and there was a passing aside—"What is to be done?"

"If I had only had time," reiterated the culprit, querulously. "People have no right to rush at one in that impetuous way, demanding answers on the spot. It makes one shake all over; I have been uncomfortable ever since,—at least, I was just quieting down when you came in to stir it all up over again. My head has been so bad this afternoon. It is no pleasure to me, I can tell you," she added, with some spirit, "to have only a lonely evening before me. I do not send Mattie away for my own good."

"Mamma, why did you not think of that before?" cried Julia.

"It would have been the very thing to say," added her sister.

Mrs Boscawen looked troubled. "I don't know, I'm sure," she said; "your aunt would immedi-

ately have set me down as selfish."

"Not if Mattie had written it herself. If she had said that she could not think of leaving you—at least, that *we* could not think of your being left entirely by yourself—Aunt Caroline would have understood at once."

"But Mattie would have been disappointed."

"Did she say so?"

"You know she never does say anything. No; I don't remember that she expressed any wish on the subject, but I think she was *willing*—I am sure she was quite *ready*, to go. It is so seldom that she cares about being taken anywhere, that I was really glad she should have the treat."

"That is it, mamma; it *is* a treat. Mamma, I do think you ought to know. Mattie likes to go to Rimmin, because Frederick—because she and Frederick——"

"What!" exclaimed Mrs Boscawen, bolt-upright on her sofa, headache and grievances forgotten.

"Oh, nothing much, mamma; nothing at all much. But she is foolish about him; at least she behaved rather absurdly once, and I am not quite sure that if anything of the sort happened a second time, she might not do the same again."

"Anything of what sort?"

Then followed Julia's version of the ride across the quicksands, and the favour which Mattie had been told to wear in her breast, and which had made her cry. "But of course," added the sister, "she was very much ashamed, and has been on her guard ever since. As Fred is going away, we thought there was no need to say anything,—it will all be forgotten before they meet again; but, for Mattie's own sake, I am sorry she is to see him again just now."

"Has she ever seen him since?"

"Only once or twice; and then she kept away from where he was, and they hardly spoke to each other at all. It will be different to-night; he will be able to find her out if he wishes, and she cannot well keep out of his way."

"I don't feel sure that she desires to keep out of his way," observed Adelaide, bluntly. "If I were certain of that, I should not mind her going so much."

"You see, mamma," pursued the milder Julia, "it is a pity to make too much of it. Fred meant nothing, but Mattie was startled, and thought him a sort of hero; and you know she is sensitive, and easily upset. Really," she subjoined, charitably, "I don't think she was so much to blame as appeared."

"But I would stop her going to-night," said Adelaide, with resolution.

"You would? Now?" Mrs Boscawen looked from one to the other, to make sure that both were in earnest,—that in the midst of all these new thoughts and ideas she still retained sense enough to understand aright.

Certainly there was no mistaking the expression on either daughter's face. They were fine-looking girls, with abundance of flaxen hair, high noses, and determined well-shapen mouths. Mattie, who was chestnut, and had a small and tender lip, was not more unlike the elder pair in her shrinking, varying temperament, than in the contrast her mobile features presented to their large calm faces. By emotion it was certain neither of the two now under scrutiny would at any time be carried away, but at the present moment they were roused as much as their mother ever remembered to have seen them. It was not becoming; they did not look the

better for it, as Mattie did ; but it answered its purpose. The parent was mastered in time. The cardinals subdued their pope ; forced from her a decree ; and compelled her to name a legate.

Meantime, within her large dimly lighted chamber, Mattie's toilet was proceeding joyously. Stepping from mirror to wardrobe, from table to cupboard, she hummed a tune in the pauses betwixt directing the maid and submitting to her nimble fingers. All went well ; the glossy locks were knotted up, the fragrant blossoms wreathed in and out between them, the white robe was on, and the pearls were clasped round the soft young throat. Completely arrayed she stood, and no fairer form had ever been reflected in the ancient pier-glass than that which, like a pensive lily, with hanging head, almost too shyly satisfied to look, paused for a last survey in front.

"Oh, to night, to-night !" whispered a voice within the young girl's bosom. "What may to-night bring ? What will to-night do ? Who would ever have dreamed that there was to be such a to-night to such a morning ?"

A tap at the door.

Mattie started. Was it the wind ? Was it the rattling of the old cornices which age had loosened, or was it a quick imperative voice without, demanding admittance ? The latter.

Blushing, she turned from the mirror, ashamed to be detected in such a contemplation, and went quickly forward as the door opened. "It was not bolted, Adelaide ; you need not have waited. The handle is stiff, that is all."

"Mattie—oh, it is a pity that you are dressed."

Mattie's eyes were raised in gentle wonder. A pity ? She had let them fall on the ground, modestly awaiting the approving glance which

perhaps even her eldest sister might vouchsafe to such a toilet, and she could not understand that her cares and pains should produce only "a pity."

"Mamma will tell you. I think she wishes to see you at once. I am in a hurry," said Adelaide, with a haste that was curious, all things considered, "I cannot stop to talk. Is Harrison gone to our room ?"

"Adelaide,—what is it ?" But Adelaide was gone.

The gloves and handkerchief just gathered into her sister's hand fell beneath the table ; something of evil Mattie boded, and even that something was enough ; it was an effort to collect herself and go down-stairs.

"You are dressed ? That is a pity. I was afraid you would be," said Mrs Boscawen, using almost the same words as her daughter had done, but in a tone of more regret. "I am really sorry you should have had the trouble, my dear ; for, on second thoughts, I think it right to cancel my permission for you to go this evening."

It had been agreed on during the council that no reason was to be given—that nothing about Frederick, at least, was to be said.

"I had not fully considered the question," continued the speaker kindly, and yet with a definite purpose and strength in her present resolution that had not been apparent in the former,— "I was taken by surprise, seized upon all at once, taken advantage of—"

"Oh, mamma !"

"Well, well, my dear, I did not mean by *you*. It was Boyd's fault, and your aunt's, and—and altogether I seemed to have no voice in the matter ; I had no choice. Your sisters, when they came in, were quite astonished to find that I had been prevailed on to consent—they thought it quite

unwise; and though I wish that you had not had all the trouble of making ready—looking so nice, too," she could not resist adding—"still I am afraid, my love, I must send you to take off your things again."

She paused for a reply, but in front of her stood a marble statue, dumb and motionless.

"Do you not understand?" pursued Mrs Boscawen, with a touch of irritation.

"Aunt Caroline," murmured Mattie, for on this rock she had built for security; "what would—she—say?"

"Adelaide will explain it to her. Both your sisters think that I ought not to be left alone on such a doleful evening; they will show that it was natural I should not think of my own comfort," said the invalid, with the complacency of one who considered herself irreproachable in that respect; "and you are so young, no one would expect you to be as thoughtful for me as the two who have been more at home, and know what a poor broken-down creature I am,—broken-down in every way. Even this wind tries my nerves almost more than I can bear," putting her hand to her forehead.

Twice her auditor essayed to speak, and twice the trembling lips refused their office; but at length a low sound caught the parent's ear.

"Well?" she said.

"Mamma——"

"Well, my dear, well? What is it? I hear you."

"Let me go this once."

Mrs Boscawen stared. This was, in plain terms, more than she had bargained for; it had been hitherto so easy to govern and direct this child, that the idea of the child ever suggesting, far less insisting on, a thing for itself, had never for a moment entered any one's head.

"What did you say?" she inquired, incredulously.

"Let me go this once, if you please, mamma."

"That I shall not," said her mother, with asperity.

"Dear mamma——" The eyes were swimming, and one large drop slipped from the lash on which it hung, and stole down the cheek. No more could be spoken at such a moment.

"Fie, Mattie! To cry for this! To make so much of such a paltry sacrifice! I am really hurt; it is the last thing I should have expected. Many a sick parent has to urge her children to leave her side for the sake of their own health, but mine require to be bidden to stay with me."

"Just this once. Dear mamma, don't speak like that; you know I like to sit with you, and read to you, and play to you, and you know I never did think it any sacrifice,—but to-night, I want—oh, I *want* to go."

"Why should you want to go? What is there about an ordinary dinner-party to make it an object of desire to any one? I am not going; and though, of course, I should like as well as others to do as they do, and take part in what they enjoy, you do not see me making a fuss and complaining that I cannot."

"If you would allow me——"

"I will not allow you. After this, after your showing so much persistency and self-will in the matter, I should consider myself quite to blame if I gave way. Now you need not stand there any longer. I am not going to have any contention on the matter; it is for me to decide on such a point, and your duty is to obey without hesitation. Go at once and take off your things."

"Mamma——"

"Really, Mattie, I could not have believed it of you. I desire you to go, and you stand as still as a stone! I never would have thought that you, of all people, would be the one to whom I should have to speak twice. I shall say no more, but I am much disappointed by the way in which you have behaved to-night."

Then Mattie left.

Mrs Boscawen had seldom in her life been so peremptory with any one. She was, as has before been hinted, a feeble-minded, characterless person, who was seldom interested in much beyond her own petty comforts or complaints,—timid by nature, yet jealous of maintaining such power over the family and household as she could by any means keep within her grasp. She was neither unkind nor inordinately selfish; provided it cost no effort, she could agree to a request cheerfully, and listen to an account with patience; but the moment an adverse wind blew, she yielded to its blast—she was at the mercy of any dominant power.

It had been distasteful to her beyond measure to find that there had been passages—scenes between the cousins, whereof she had known nothing. A deprivation of this sort was precisely what she could smart under; and, moreover, the consciousness of not having herself behaved with strict integrity, of having been evasive and timorous during the interview with the elder sisters, had found vent in an extra display of peevish authority when she had been called on anew to face the younger. They should not, one and all, set her at nought as they had done; she would have one at least under her maternal sway; and though Adelaide and Julia had as usual made this sway their cat's-paw, Mattie could not know, she flattered herself, that they had done

so. (Mattie, we may be allowed to suspect, knew very well; but that is not to our purpose.)

And then Mrs Boscawen was really vexed by what she had heard.

Sir Frederick might, of course, had he so chosen, have sought an alliance with his Scottish cousins; it would have been perhaps satisfactory if he had done so. But since nothing of the kind had ever been attempted, and since, up to the present time, they had all got on so amicably together, it was really too tiresome of Mattie, a chit of a school-girl, to come home and introduce an element of discord between the sober households. What should she know of Fred in three months? Adelaide and Julia had been intimate with him for years, had stayed at his hunting-box, where Lady Turner presided during the spring months, and met him every other night in town for several seasons,—yet to them he was only an escort, a good-humoured influential cousin, good for tickets to shows and *fêtes*—a man whom they liked to be seen with, but whom they had not the smallest ambition to be with unless they *were* seen. They tried to believe that he admired them and was proud of them; but there was sufficient uncertainty on the point to provoke effort, to make them more than ordinarily particular as to their appearance and manners when he was present.

At least, however, he should not amuse himself with Mattie. He had never attempted anything of the sort with either of the grown-up Miss Boscawens, and they had no idea of his paying their sister the dubious compliment of gallantry that meant nothing. If there lurked a secret twinge of jealousy at her having attracted an attention, even a passing attention, which their charms had failed to inspire, at least

the fair prudes did not themselves suspect as much. They felt that they had done the right thing as to the point now at issue, and attired themselves for the evening, with the peaceful consciousness that the desired end had been attained.

"But we need not say anything to your father," observed Mrs Boscawen, to the first who came down after the interview above narrated.

It chanced to be Julia—Julia in ruffles and flounces, ribbons and jewels, more ample, fuller blown than ever; and as she spoke, the mother surveyed the finery doubtfully. Mattie had looked different.

To be sure, what suited Mattie would hardly have been the thing for Julia; and the simple folds of a white frock, which did excellently well for slim eighteen, were not perhaps calculated to set off the maturer form of robust five-and-twenty. There was so much of this particular five-and-twenty, moreover,—such a neck and bust, and arms and shoulders, that the fully trimmed, festooned, and rustling train could not be said to be superabundant; but, nevertheless, the effect was not so pleasing as it ought to have been. Had necessity compelled the mother to desire that it and all its accessories should be doffed, it is certain that she would not have ejaculated that "Looking so nice, too," which escaped ere she was aware, when passing the decree upon her youngest.

No fears nor doubts, however, disturbed the resplendent Julia herself. Satisfaction shone in her eye, showed itself in the tones of her voice, and even influenced the tenor of her reply. She agreed with her mother, and spoke of her sister as "Poor Mattie."

"I went to her room just now," she said, "and she was so quiet that I should not have thought she

had minded, only I saw that she had thrown down all her things—her nice white muslin and all, in a heap on the floor; and her hair was loose over her shoulders——"

"That was temper; there was no need to have touched her hair. She might, at least, have let me have the pleasure of seeing it nicely arranged, she need not have thought it wasted."

"You did not give any reason for stopping her, mamma?"

"None whatever. I said exactly what you and Adelaide told me,—nothing that she could have minded—nothing, at least, that she *ought* to have minded. I could not believe my ears, when she actually tried to make me alter my decision afterwards."

"Did she do that?"

"She did indeed."

"What did she say, mamma?"

"She begged to go; that was all. Quite enough too, for one who never asks to be taken anywhere. It showed me immediately that I was right—that you and Adelaide were right, in advising me to put a stop to it."

"I am really sorry for her. Mamma, don't say any more about it; it will do no good."

"And I am sure *I* have had enough of the subject. I wish now you would all get away as quickly as possible, and let us settle down to our quiet evening. I daresay we shall be quite happy together. Your father has brought in the parcel from the library; it was kind of him to call for it, and it will be quite an interest to Mattie to see what we have got. I am looking forward to her reading aloud—it will keep the dismal howling of the wind out of my ears."

Already she was impatient to begin. "I do wish you were all out of the way now," she proceeded. "Could you not go down to the

drawing-room and wait there? The going in and out, and the talking of many people in this little room, always fusses me."

"Very well, mamma; I will go down with the very next person that appears; but I may stay till some one does, may I not? This room is so nice and warm," with a little shiver.

"Have you wraps enough?"

"Quite, mamma, thank you."

"You will not get blown about at either house, that is one good thing. The entrance to Rimmin is as well sheltered as our own."

"Better; at least it was better until papa built up that archway. Oh, we shall be quite out of the wind going in and out of the carriage, but I wish we had not to drive along the shore-road: the tide is so high to-night that the waves are breaking right over the rocks."

"Indeed!" said Mrs Boscawen, languidly. She was not going to drive along the shore-road herself, and the waves seemed a good way off from her cosy pillows. "Oh, here are papa and Adelaide at last. Now then, good-bye; go down to the drawing-room everybody. What! Is the carriage there? That's right, then. Do shut the door, Boyd, the cold air coming in from the passage chills one all over. Put your shawls on, girls, quickly."

"But were is Mattie?" inquired her husband.

"She will be here directly. As soon as you are gone, we shall have our little dinner together——"

——"Is she not going with us?"

"Not to-night; she will go another night."

"I wish her to go to-night," said Mr Boscawen, decidedly. "Julia, call your sister, and say we are waiting."

"Papa——" Julia paused, looking round for support; and at the

look, a voice was raised from the sofa.

"It is impossible, my dear," said the mother. "If I had known that you wished it before—but now it is too late. She is not thinking of going. She is not dressed, nor—nor anything."

"Then she must dress, and tell her to be quick."

"The carriage is at the door."

"It can wait a few minutes. Do as I desire you, Julia."

To such a tone even Julia must submit, and without a word she left the room.

But who shall describe the shock of mingled feelings which that message gave? Oh, how bitterly did Mattie now repent her ill-advised haste, her passionate weeping! Get ready to go now? *Now*, when every single part of her attire would have to be put on afresh,—when her hair, all dishevelled as it was, would in itself require care, pains, attention,—and when the flowers lay broken on the floor?

Now? Was she dreaming? Her trembling feet refused their office, as she rose in bewildered consternation, and down upon the chair she sank again. Could she ever, with such a beating heart and such nerveless fingers, begin from the beginning once more, and rehabilitate herself within the time permitted? Harrison seemed an age in coming.

"And oh, Miss Mattie," cried the maid, "'twill take a good half-hour, your hair alone; and there's your dress to lace, and the bows to tie, and even then—bless me, bless me!" Which latter aspiration, murmured under the speaker's breath, was called forth by a vision of the pale, tear-stained face beside her, as contrasted with its glowing freshness when last seen so short a time before.

"I can be ready, Julia, indeed I can. Oh, Harrison, what need to

brush my hair all over? Put it up as it was, or—or any way you can. Oh, my flowers, my pretty flowers! Oh, Julia, why did mamma change so often? why did she insist on my undressing, as she did? Tell papa I will be ready immediately. Dear, kind papa. Please find my gloves, Harrison, I had them one minute ago.”

Another messenger, in haste and breathless, a voice at the door saying, “If Miss Mattie’s ready, she is to come; if not, Miss Julia is to come immediately. Coachman says the tide is still rising, and the horses will be frightened if the waves come too near. Master says he can’t wait another minute.”

“It’s of no use, Miss Mattie,” said Harrison, with the calmness of despair; “we couldn’t be ready, not if we tried never so, for a quarter of an hour——”

“I must go, you see,” added Julia, hurriedly. “Don’t go on trying, Mattie, it is of no use. I wish papa had let it alone.”

“Get on, Harrison, get on,” whispered the youthful mistress to her maid, as the two were left behind. “Never mind what they say; I shall be in time yet. Are you nearly done? Oh, this dreadful gown! How far have you got? You must be half-way? I can be collecting my things——”

“If you jump about like that, Miss, I can’t find the holes.”

“Well; but tell me the moment you reach the top—— *What is that?*”

It was the carriage rolling away from the front door.

Mrs Boscawen rather enjoyed her dinner after that. She considerably explained that, if she had only known her husband’s wishes in time, she would not have cancelled her permission, and would not have sent her daughter to unrobe; she

also demonstrated that if Mattie had not been over-impetuous in fulfilling her commands, her toilet might have been effected for the second time without difficulty. Finally, she considered that everybody had been to blame, and that she, who had tried to please all, had been unrewarded for her efforts. It was certainly hard that her husband, who so seldom took any part in family matters, should have been vexed and put out by what had happened. She could not understand his caring about such a trifle at all, and still less his, “Well, I suppose I can make it all straight, but I wish it had not happened.”

With unusual discretion, she did not confide the above remark to her companion, aware that it might be ruminated upon more than would be advisable, but confined herself to general subjects, after a passing word of commendation to Mattie’s thoughtfulness in coming at once when summoned to the meal, instead of waiting for further alterations in her appearance. It could do her pretty dress no more harm to wear it on this quiet occasion, than to take it out and have it crushed among a crowd of people. She liked to see her children nice, and so seldom had that pleasure, that really it did her good,—and so on, and so on. But, alas! after dinner the headache returned, so that even books and music could not be thought of with any satisfaction. No, she must go to bed; she was very sorry; it was vexatious, now that they might have had a nice cheery evening together, but it was of no use bearing up any longer. “And don’t sit up late yourself, little one,” exhorted the parent, as she left the room. “You will not have above an hour or two alone, for it is nearly eight now,—you might have come into my room, but I must try to get a sleep. Don’t

go on with the story to yourself, Mattie; that would be too bad of you, when we are both so much interested. I think I shall take it with me," laughing, "to put it out of the way, for fear you should be tempted. Good night. Dear, that wind! But I don't think it is quite so bad as it was."

Not a sound now broke the silence in the house, save the dull moaning of the blast without, and the occasional patter of a shower on the window-panes. The servants were too far off in their own regions for voice or laugh to penetrate the passages above; and in the weird stillness which prevailed, the striking of the hour by the great clock outside made the solitary watcher start.

She started still more when immediately following the last note of eight there rang through the house the sharp imperative peal of the great door-bell. At such an hour, on such a night, who could be thus seeking admittance? Tenants did occasionally come of an evening, when business obliged them to speak to her father, and a message from the farm was a thing of frequent occurrence, but such visitors or despatches were usually conveyed through the back door; and even the parcels sent up by the village tradespeople found their way into the house without passing through the entrance-hall.

What could it be? The others returned? No, the road was never impassable, even in a spring-tide; and if anything had happened to the horses, news must have been heard of it long before. They had had time to reach Rimmin and come back again, Mattie calculated. But what should the carriage return for? There was a carriage, she made out, as in some curiosity she hung over the staircase, listening and peering through

the open door into the portico. How very odd! It must be their carriage, of course, and what was it doing there? Come for *her*?

Boyd was leisurely ascending the staircase ere the thought had had time to do more than dart into the listener's mind—ere she had had a minute wherein to canvass its merits, and school herself for its rejection if necessary. And once more in that eventful evening she had to learn that the wheel of fortune had turned.

"Sir Frederick's carriage come to fetch you, Miss Mattie, by master's orders," said the old man, with cheerful sympathy in his eye and tone. "Her ladyship hopes to find you in the drawing-room when they come out from dinner."

And accordingly, a pale, silent girl was sitting in a distant recess of the great drawing-room at Rimmin, listening, or feigning to listen, to a companion of her own age, pretty Isabel Wray, who was bearing her company, when Frederick cast his eyes around to see whether the day was like to be his own or not. He came in last of all the stragglers from the dining-room. He stood still in the doorway, as though he had no particular desire to enter further, pulling his long moustache, and speaking to no one; but something in the gesture, in the pause and halt, meant to Mattie that her cousin had seen her. Next she became aware, and that without once raising her head or turning from her companion, that he was coming.

"How do you do?" said Fred. "What a long way off from everybody you two have flown! Did you come here to escape from us all?"

"Miss Wray," continued he, pleasantly, after a while, "how good it was of you not to have been

singing before we came in! I was afraid we had been missing a great deal. May we hope you will now—ah—delight us all with a ballad?"

It was too late, another lady had been prevailed upon.

"Have you seen these new prints?" The polite host adroitly covered his defeat. "We have only just got the book. My mother is tremendously taken with them."

In fact, Lady Turner had already inflicted the volume on all present, and it had at length been made over to the girls. They had dutifully gone through the whole set, and everything that could be said had already been exhausted between them; but under Sir Frederick's guidance, to be sure, they were nothing loath to commence the task afresh.

He was bent on finding entertainment for both, directing his attentions to Isabel, but keeping by the other's side. Yet he scarcely spoke to Mattie, leaning across her even, to point out beauties to her companion; and she began at last to wonder whether she was really happy or wretched, and to commune with herself as to whether she had not better take the first opportunity of rising and leaving a seat which, although by her cousin's side, yet brought her no closer to him.

At length the sounds of music ceased.

"Miss Hamilton is tired," said Fred, shutting the book briskly; "and she is not in voice to-night. We must not allow her to be tasked again. Now it is your turn." And he rose, resolutely addressing Isabel.

Naturally she stood up also.

A table which had been drawn in front of the trio for the heavy book to lie upon was pushed aside by the gentleman,—pushed right in front of his cousin, that Miss Wray

might pass by the more conveniently, and in the movement a clumsy accident occurred—a valuable vase of Lady Turner's was thrown down and broken.

"Oh dear!" cried both the horror-stricken damsels, in consternation.

"Pray go on," implored the more hardened offender. "Don't stop, or it will be noticed. I will pick up the pieces. In the name of charity, Miss Wray, rush to the piano, and save me from my mother."

Miss Wray obeyed, and the coast was clear at last.

"Mattie," said Frederick, very softly, "help me, will you?"

She stooped in search of the fragments, and he, like a blockhead, took the same moment for stooping also, at the risk of the two heads crashing together. Was it that which made her start, and the china fall from her hand again? No, it was not a blow, but a whisper from her cousin. "I must see you for a moment alone. I must speak to you to-night."

The song began.

"Go into my mother's little room," said Fred, with his back to the company, and his head still bent over the broken jar. "Go out at this door, and no one can see,—you won't refuse me? Wait till you hear. I will be with you immediately."

How she got out, or whether she were really unobserved or not as she stole away, Mattie never knew. Fred declared afterwards that she did it admirably, but then he allowed at the same time that he had neither looked nor cared; he knew she *went*, and that was enough for him.

He found his own way out by the principal entrance at the other end of the room, taking, as it were, a casual stroll towards it, with a

word here and a word there to one and another of the company whom chance threw in his way, and then seizing his opportunity to escape when all were engaged. Within a very few minutes he was keeping his tryst.

But the light was so partial in the little room, only a single bar of moonshine having shot through the mullioned window, that to the first survey no figure was discernible anywhere within.

He stopped short. "Mattie!"

"I am here."

She was nearly hidden from his view by the curtain, even when her voice directed him where to look; her dress might have been one of its folds, in the deep shadow where she stood.

"I am here." But she did not turn round, nor move towards him.

The waves were booming over the rocks below, but there was no longer the angry roar of a flowing tide to aid their clamour; the wind had subsided with its ebb, and a sullen swell had succeeded to the tumult of the waters.

Even so was Mattie's breast heaving with departed passions, conflicts, griefs, and bitterness. All these were over now; she scarcely trembled—she was calm, solemn, wrapped in a sort of trance;—a sense of wondering awe held her still, and quieted the beating of her heart. What had happened, or what was going to happen, she could but dimly realise. Yet was she neither confused nor bewildered, only conscious of a deep strange peace, and then of a voice in her ear, a presence by her side, some one holding her in his arms. "Why, Mattie! My darling!"

Mattie did not swoon away, she only turned very white and sank gently forwards, before she was caught and upheld; and since even

fainting people can do without water when it is not to be had, it is to be presumed that Frederick considered this to be a case in which that restorative might be dispensed with.

He did not go in search of it, he tried other means; and so successful were these, that tears were flowing and cheeks were blushing rosy red again, long ere he had done: and so much had to be said, and vowed, and sworn, and the speaker was so fervent and impetuous in his mode of saying it, and so resolute in claiming his right to add appropriate accompanying actions, that his fair companion was in no danger of mistaking reality for dreamland again.

"But, indeed, you gave me a fright when first I saw you to-night," said Fred, at last. "I could not understand that pale, sorrowful face. I thought we had dragged you here against your will. Why, —did your father not tell you all about it?"

"My father?" said Mattie, raising her eyes.

"Who else? Did he — did you not know? I waylaid him this afternoon, got his consent and his promise to bring you. Then I went home and made my mother write."

"And when I did not come?"

"Ay, indeed, when you did not come, I thought it was all up with me; but my uncle had the charity to take me aside before dinner and explain how it was. So I sent for you. Why, the tide was nothing; that coachman of yours is an old wife for thinking of such rubbish. But, do you know, my little cousin, I had not the pluck to ask whether you had obeyed the summons or not! Upon my word, Mattie, I was such a craven, that I sat still in the dining-room, though I heard the carriage pass the window, and

could not muster enough spirit either to make an excuse for going outside to meet you, or even to inquire if you were there. Until I beheld you with my own eyes, I had no idea what I was to expect. And now——”

And now the victory was his, as he deserved it should be. Like a right bold gallant, he had gone straight on his course—whatever of weakness he might choose to confess in a tender moment—and the event had justified his temerity. His cousin, he had argued within himself, had certainly been cold, constrained, and distant to him—but that was all he could allege against his hopes of her. And what of that? Was it for him to be backward because the woman of his choice did not fling herself into his arms? Cold, indeed! Were she to all appearance as cold as ice, was that to say there was no warmth within,—no smouldering volcano beneath the snowy surface? How could he tell if he never tried? He would have it out, yea or nay, and know her mind from her own lips. If she loved him, well; if not, if she would have none of him, the worst was out, and there would

be no more beating about the bush, disappointments, vexations, and heart-burnings ever recurring. He would bear his rejection if need be, like a man, but he would at least meet it face to face. In short, our lover made a second dash through the quicksands, and a second time reached the shore in safety. Would that more were like him!

But Mattie's ups and downs were scarcely over for that eventful evening even now. She had to go back to the great saloon presently, to run the gauntlet of inquisitive glances, of affectionate anxiety, and of sisterly frowns. Even with Fred by her side, these could not but be felt, even with his shadow between her and the lights, her lip must quiver and her eyelids droop. While the rest of the company remained, the hour must have its drawbacks.

But at length came happiness, complete and unalloyed. She was cleared in the eyes of all; her father smiled, her sisters stared, she was taken to her aunt's heart, and she was Fred's for evermore.

Now, was there ever likely to be another evening in Mattie's life like unto this?

THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH.

“And there were some who held that this fountain was to be found in no wood nor valley of the world ; but rather in the eyes of children, and in the strong hearts of men.”

(COLIN, a youth who seems most woe-begone, meets the elderly THEANOR, who almost seems a youth.)

Colin. And have you found it? Did it lie your way?
No?—And I cannot find it. Seek, I pray;
The wood's not large, and somewhere in this wood
Wells the enchanted fountain.

Theanor. 'Tis no good.

Col. But the wise woman said—

Thea. She lied, methinks.

Col. Mock me not! Help me! When this parched mouth drinks
From the bright fount of youth, I then shall live;
If the wise woman lied, here let me give
All that is mine to thee, for I am dead.
Here on this moss-grown root I lay my head,
And give my last brief breath to the languid air
That faints on the shadowed fern. Oh sweet and fair
Is youth! I will not live with wearing age.

Thea. How old are you?

Col. I'm twenty.

Thea. Sweet and sage

Is the ripe time of manhood! Come, get up;
The moss is damp; come home with me and sup.

Col. Ah me, most wretched! I am no more a boy.
The ecstasy of boyhood—the quick joy
Of life, free life i' the sun—is mine no more.
No part have I in fair fields loved of yore;
In elms, that lay great shadows on smooth grass;
In the slow-moving water, clouded glass
For maiden saplings, o'er whose noiseless stream
Hangs low the old red bridge, where I did dream
My dream of youth and friendship. All is gone;
Lost, lost my friends—my friends—and I alone!

Thea. The boy is clean distraught.

Col. Give me to learn,
Spirit of the wood, where 'mid the tender fern
Lies the enchanted pool; give me to sip,
Where yet no weary mortal has set lip,

And put far off the hour of age from him ;
To feel again youth burn in languid limb,
Fire in the failing eye, fire in the breast.
Nay, she lied not ! I see ! Lo, where at rest
Lies the enchanted pool, cool, clear, and dim !
Lush grasses half afloat are at the rim ;
And in the midst bright bubbles, one by one,
Rise from the old world's heart to die i' the sun,—
Sun-god, who here and there through listening shade
Speeds a winged shaft for greeting ; all the glade
Is rich with young green fern, clothed all, save where
A great rock, breaking through to woodland air,
Tells of the neighbouring ocean ; in my ear,
Like sad sweet memories of a vanished year,
Stirring my soul with dreams too great for me,
Low croons the voice of the voiceless lonely sea.

Thea. Voice of the voiceless ! Mad !

Col.

True it must be,

Or how should these eyes see it ? For they see
This picture always with them day and night ;—
The little glade flecked o'er with broken light ;
Fern-glimmer, and rock-shadow ; bubble of the pool.
O fountain of the forest, sweet and cool,
Give me to drink ; oh, sweetest, how I thirst !
And I shall drink thy waters—I, the first
Of many men whose youth has passed away.

Thea. Come, come, dear boy, you can't stay here all day ;
Come home with me ; you're flushed and feverish ;
It's a wild fancy, a mere madman's wish
To be a boy again.

Col.

Nay, mock me not !

If it be true, if this enchanted spot
Be here, close to us, here, you too would drink
And be a boy.

Thea.

Good heavens ! I ! I think
I'd sooner be a monkey. I hate boys :
Dumb when they ought to talk, and full of noise
When one is drowsy. Boys are raw and crude ;
Out of proportion ; too polite, too rude ;
Choked with old compliments. I ! I resign
My knowledge of the world, my taste in wine,
My—ha !—my tact with women !

Col.

Wooded, unwed

Ophelia, maid i' the maiden flowers dead,
May rose that couldst not live to life's hot June,
Hear my sad moan. Dead of the lark's glad tune,

That all too soon in the woful dawn was sung,
 Juliet, twice dead, sweet that didst die so young,
 Oh hear me! Age with blighting eyes and dim
 Looked not on these bright children. See! they swim
 There—there!—beyond the oak-tree! See—there—see!
 Cordelia, Desdemona beckons me.
 Hush! Hear their singing. Hush!—

(A voice of a child singing.)

All the field for our delight
 Blossoms fair with daisies white:
 Angel fresh from Bethlehem,
 Swept it with her garment's hem;
 In the morn the field did wake
 White with daisies for our sake.

Though gold flowers in the sky
 Shine by night most gloriously,
 Yet an angel wandered down
 Through our field with trailing gown;
 And when morning came anew,
 Buttercups were filled with dew.

Praise to angels let us give,
 For they teach the flowers to live,
 Teach the little birds to sing;
 And our lambs in early spring
 Keep all warm, when heaven bright
 Soft is spread with fleeces white.

Thea. Ah! sweetly pretty!

Col.

Music be my guide!

Bird, girl, or angel, lead me to thy side.

Again the music. Hush!—

(The voice is heard again.)

Sunbeam from your heaven astray
 Lead a child upon her way;
 Sunbeam from the hidden sky
 Show me where the pool doth lie;
 Sunbeam stealing through the tree,
 Touch the fount of youth for me.

Thea. Bald!

Col.

Silence! Lo where she comes.

Thea.

I see

A little village girl.

Col.

It seems to me

An angel.

Thea. With a tattered doll, I think.

Col. Angel and child, ah, tell me where to drink !
Where is this fount of youth ? Nay, do not fear.

Thea. You frighten her. Come here, my little dear,
And tell me—now I do not think I'm wrong
In thinking there was something in your song
About a fountain ?

Child. Yes, sir.

Thea. And you know
Where this thing is ?

Child. It's here ; she told me so ;
She said that I should find it in the wood.

Thea. Who said ?

Child. The witch. She said if I'd be good,
That I should find the fountain.

Thea. Well, in truth,
'Twas droll to send a child in search of youth.
Are you so old ?

Col. Don't mock her. Speak to me,
Tell me your tale, my child.

Child. Yes, sir. You see
Dolly and I were playing by the ditch,
Where the plank's put across ; and an old witch
Stood up in the hedge, just like a crooked thorn,
And said that my dear doll was old and worn.
Then I cried ; then she told me to be bold,
For that no people ever need be old
Unless they liked. So I came along the hedge,
Just as she said ; past the big elm to the edge
Of this great wood ; and somewhere on the grass
There is a pool just like a looking-glass ;
And when I see it shining in the light,
I'm to dip dolly in, but hold her tight.

Thea. The little dear ! I'm really quite distressed ;
It's too pathetic ; but the truth is best.
My dear, that was a bad old woman, who
Deceived my friend, and 's now deceiving you.
Be a brave girl ; don't cry.

Child. No ; I'll be good ;
But please, is there no fountain in the wood ?
Must dolly still be old ?

Thea. She must.

Col. Not so !
Lift up your eyes to mine. Trust me ; I know

How to bring back the rose to dolly's cheek ;
(Strange flowers in the moonlight must I seek
With moonlight rhymes.) Your dolly's little head
Shall laugh in the sun with golden curls ; bright red
Shall be the lips, which smile when she is gay ;
And garments meet for a queen's marriage-day
Shall fold her soft—your darling—yours and mine.
Trust her to me. Ere the next sun do shine,
I'll bear your little one to your mother's door ;
And when your blue eyes open, on the floor
Just opposite your little lint-white bed
Those eyes shall see the golden priceless head
Of your old dolly—by my art made young.
What have you done to me ? What bird has sung
A joy-song in my heart, as caged birds sing ?
I ope the door ; up, up with strong glad wing—
Beyond the trees, beyond the sailing cloud ;
Up, high and free from the dull toiling crowd ;
Up to thy home, where angel hands disclose
The inmost heart of the labyrinthine rose.

*(The child comes to him ; she puts up her lips
to be kissed, and lays her doll in his arms ;
then she goes homeward singing.)*

Come great mother Night, and spread
Wings for curtains to my bed ;
Closer mother, till I rest
Safe and happy on thy breast,—
Safe and happy all night long.
Angels, keep the world from wrong ;
Angels, guard me in my sleep ;
And when morning light doth peep
At my window, let me see
My dear doll safe home with me.

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY.—PART VIII.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CLIFFORD went home that night a prey to mingled doubts and emotions. At one moment, stung by his cousin's treatment, and recognising more distinctly than ever his own indifference to her, he would feel resolved to break off altogether from his bond, and be free at all costs. Poverty with freedom would be better than wealth with such a tie as this. Then, again, he would ask himself whether Blanche might not be playing a part, purposely making herself repulsive to him; whether, knowing what Clifford now guessed to be her father's perilous position, her aim might not be to goad him into renouncing his fortune in her favour. But he could not bring himself to believe this seriously. It was more probable that, still supposing her father to possess the enormous wealth he was popularly reputed to have, she was indifferent about securing her cousin's moderate fortune, and wished to discourage his suit, hoping to do better for herself. She might be wanting to save him the pain of a refusal. But then, again, knowing, as he believed he now did, the actual condition of Scal-lan's affairs, how far would he be justified in allowing her to break off the agreement under a delusion, and thus lose the fortune which might otherwise be hers? — for marry her now he would not. And would it not be better in every way, to say nothing of its being certainly more honourable and straightforward, to acknowledge his own inability to carry out the conditions of the will, and to surrender the estate of which he now believed his relations to stand in dire need?

He now knew why the idea of this marriage seemed so repulsive, which up to this time he had been contemplating, if not with eagerness, at least without repugnance. His heart was wholly given to Hilda; he wondered now how he could ever have felt so dispassionately towards her as he had until within the last few days. And then, his thoughts thus turned to Hilda, he reflected, with sinking heart, that the gain of freedom would also involve his descent from the extinction of the peculiar position he occupied towards the woman he loved. Perhaps all the bitterness might be in store for him of finding that Clifford the pauper was held far cheaper than Clifford the powerful friend and protector and patron of herself and family. And even if she did love him for his own sake, what right would he have to drag her down into his poverty? "Oh that I had been brought up to earn my bread for myself, free from these cursed trammels and conditions! Whichever way I turn there seems no hope of happiness, no way out of the difficulty." And yet as he said this, there whispered a silent voice, often heard by him of late, telling him that there was one way by which he might secure his love, and yet not lose everything else. Even that involved a great sacrifice for him, and how much a greater for her! Would she ever consent to make it if he asked her? Even now, was he prepared to meet his part of it?

Clifford was by temperament an undecided man, and while simple in his personal tastes, he was not

without the love of power which his wealth commanded. Thus, although striving all through the night to make up his mind what course to pursue, now that he was brought face to face with the need for giving a definite answer to the question which he felt sure was impending, the morning found him still unprepared with a decision.

And Hilda, when they met next day, was more fascinating than ever. She would not express all her thanks, knowing instinctively that to say much would be distasteful; but her gratitude was expressed in her manner—in the kindling eye, the joyous yet shy manner. Clifford felt with elation that there was now real sympathy between them, and as they sat talking together that morning, she told him by degrees the history of her past life—why should she conceal it any longer from so true a friend? And although she touched lightly on the faults of father and brother, Clifford was quick enough to infer much that was suppressed. Of one thing Hilda gave him no hint, although the painful recollection of her elder brother's baseness still remained to dull the edge of the pleasure which Arthur's abduction had created. No explanation had passed between brother and sister on Hilda's return home the previous evening, but from his shame-faced sullen manner she could have no doubt about Harry's guilt.

Clifford meanwhile was plotting another surprise, of which this young man should be the object. Although he asked her many questions about her brother, he had already taken his resolution what to do for Harry, and the information she now gave him confirmed him in his intention. Presently Jane, entering the office where the two were sitting, announced that a young gentleman had called by

appointment. Clifford ordered that he should be shown into his own room, and presently followed him thither. The young man was Harry Reid, who was lounging about the room when Clifford entered, looking at the titles of the books on the shelves, and who came forward and held out his hand in an effusive way.

Clifford shook hands with him accordingly, although he had not intended to exhibit so much cordiality, and asked him to take a chair.

The two being seated, Clifford remained silent at first, partly from shyness, but also the while thinking over what he intended to say. But Mr Harry, among whose faults an excess of bashfulness was not included, opened the conversation by observing—

"I am punctual to your appointment, Mr Clifford, you see; I only got your note at ten o'clock, and came up by the first train. I want you to continue to have a good opinion of all the family, as I am sure you have at present." He said this in a way meant to be prepossessing, and then without noticing the look of disgust on the other's face, he continued—"I am glad to see my sister has such a comfortable berth of it, and I hope she gives you every satisfaction. We think a great deal of Hilda at home, I assure you. She is the first person in our house. She has had great advantages, you see, owing to my aunt, that was, taking her up, and all that. Now I have never had a chance, more's the pity."

"That was the point I wanted to come to, when I asked you to do me the favour to call here," said Clifford, with a lofty air, by way of keeping the other at a distance. "You have not been brought up to any profession, I believe, Mr Reid?"

"It's all the governor's fault," replied Harry, a sulky look replacing the would-be ingratiating expression which his face had so far worn. "If the governor had taken any pains about it, he could have got me a commission, and I should have been well on in the lieutenants by this time, and very likely out in India, getting no end of pay. But he let the time go by, and so here I am doing nothing. But it isn't my fault."

"I suppose you would rather not be a burden to your sister for longer than you could help?"

"I don't know why Hilda should complain about it," said the young man still more sulkily: "I am sure I don't cost her much, or anybody else; and it isn't my fault that I was not in the army long ago, and independent of her and the governor too—not that I am more of a burden than the governor, for all his big talking. And it isn't my fault that I can't get anything to do. I am ready enough to turn my hand to anything, if Hilda would only be a little patient."

"You are quite mistaken, Mr Harry; your sister has made no complaints whatever. I merely assumed that a man of independent mind like you would not wish to depend on any one,—not even on a sister."

"Quite so, sir; that's quite what I mean. I am one of the independent sort. I am quite ready to take anything I can get to do. But it isn't always so easy to find something. Hilda even could not get a situation the moment she wanted it, although she has tumbled into a good thing now." And Harry leered in a way that Clifford found embarrassing.

"England is a little crowded with young men of brains and muscle, isn't it? There are more candi-

dates than places, as I daresay you have found."

"That's just my case, Mr Clifford," assented the young man. "You have hit it off exactly. And yet I am always on the look-out for an opening,—I never take up the paper without going through the advertisements to see if there is anything to suit; but as the governor says, most of the openings want capital."

"Have you ever thought of the colonies as offering a suitable field for your abilities?"

Now that Clifford had read the young man's character, his shyness had gone, and he enjoyed using the sarcasm of which his visitor was quite unconscious.

Harry started. The colonies! The very thing he had been thinking of. Hilda must have mentioned his wishes after all. What a trump the girl was!

"Yes, sir," he replied, eagerly; "the colonies would be the very place for me, I am sure. I only want an opening to go ahead, I feel sure of that. I would give anything if I could only get to the colonies. And I am sure, sir, that if any kind friend would advance the little capital necessary"—Harry had caught this word from his father—"the governor would join me in going security for it. And Hilda, too——"

"Have you ever considered on which particular colony you would propose to confer the benefit of your presence?"

"Now you are chaffing a fellow, Mr Clifford." But as Clifford looked quite grave, he added, "No, I haven't thought much about that. Any colony, I should think, would do, so long as——"

"It's a colony? Quite so. What do you say to Canada?"

"I should like Canada immensely."

"Or the Cape?"

"The Cape would be first-rate. I believe there are splendid openings at the Cape."

"Or New Zealand?"

"Well, you see, sir, I don't know much about these places, although I recollect Bermuda very well when the governor was stationed there; but I feel pretty sure if I only got a chance I could do something. I don't care where it is, so long as I get a chance."

"Well, then, suppose we say New Zealand? I would not have troubled to unfold your plans so fully if I did not propose to assist you in giving effect to them. I suppose, with your impulse to be up and doing so strong upon you, you would be glad to make a speedy start. Have you any business that would detain you? Any engagement, or ties of any sort?"

The young man coloured a little, as the last question was put to him slowly, and looked confused, but said, "No; and I daresay, sir, the sooner I am off the better. I don't suppose Hilda and the governor will miss me much."

"Unnatural relatives! Well, then, this is Monday, what do you say to Friday?"

The young man gave a start of surprise and joy. Could it be possible that he was to be his own master, and off in less than a week? "Do you really mean this, sir?" he said. "Upon my word, I am awfully obliged."

"A vessel sails for New Zealand on Friday," resumed Clifford, without noticing his remark; "if you will have the goodness to take this letter into the City, the agents to whom it is addressed will secure a passage for you, if one be still available. They will also procure an outfit for you to your order, to the amount of fifty pounds."

"Fifty pounds!" cried Harry,

to whom this sum appeared like untold wealth.

"You won't find it at all too much. Let me recommend you to be careful in your purchases, and order nothing that is not absolutely necessary. Any balance you can save out of it will be yours to take with you, to meet your wants on landing. But now, have you thought at all how you will set about getting your living when you arrive in New Zealand?"

"Oh, never fear, sir, I shall get along like paint," replied Harry, to whose nature the idea of looking forward to any time so distant as a couple of months was altogether foreign, while in this case the transfer of the situation to the other side of the world seemed to place it far away in the indefinite future. "Let me once get out there and I shall do well enough;" and Harry shuffled uneasily in his chair, anxious to be off with his letter to the City before his benefactor should have time to change his mind.

"Well, but even to a man of your natural powers there may be a little delay in getting to work. It is as well to make provision against possible contingencies. Here is another letter which I would ask you to have the goodness to take charge of. You see it is addressed to a person at Dunedin—a person who has done some friendly offices for me before: he has been asked to give you a helping hand if you should need one and deserve it; and he will be prepared to pay you a pound a-week for the first three months after your arrival, by the end of which time you should be able to run alone. And now, perhaps you had better be starting for the City," and Clifford rose from his chair. He had enjoyed the proceeding on the whole. He liked when he did a kindness to do it completely. If there was any good

in the youth such an opportunity would surely bring it out; something might perhaps be made out of even this unpromising material, and he tried to persuade himself that he was doing a thoroughly disinterested action. And yet the act jumped so with his own wishes that he could not but suspect his own conscience.

Harry got up too on the first signal for rising. "I am awfully obliged to you, Mr Clifford," he said, "I am really;" and he stood hesitating, apparently trying to find something to say more adequate to the occasion.

"You will show what you feel by being steady and getting on, I hope; that will be the best return you can make to me—and your sister, for all she has done for you." Clifford was about to add a word of friendly advice, although his experience led him to the conclusion that advice was a seed that seldom produced any crop unless sown on good ground, but Harry broke in—

"Ah, it's about Hilda, sir; I assure you I am awfully sorry to leave Hilda." In one sense this was true; yet as he spoke the young man was conscious of a feeling that he should be very glad if he could manage to get off that very evening without meeting his sister again. The shame which he had felt when they met on the previous evening was still fresh on him. Nothing had been said, and he could not tell how much Hilda knew about the robbery, but his guilty conscience told him that she suspected the truth.

"That is a very right and proper feeling, Mr Harry, and does you credit; but your sister has still her father to take care of her, you know."

"Oh, the governor," said Harry, with a tone of contempt; "it's Hilda takes care of the governor,

I think. But I hope there's better luck in store for Hilda than to have to stay on keeping house for the governor," and Harry looked at his benefactor with a knowing smile. "Of course I am not such a fool," he continued, "as to suppose that you are doing all this merely out of kindness for me—and little Arthur, too, whom you have put out to a tip-top school at Richmond. No, Mr Clifford, I am sharp enough to see through it all, I can tell you."

"What do you mean?" asked Clifford, trying to appear calm, but turning crimson, and regretting the next moment that by putting the question he had given his visitor an opportunity to go on.

"Well, sir, I may just as well be out with it, and no offence meant at the liberty, I am sure. It's easy to see that you are sweet on Hilda; and I don't wonder at it, for a nicer and a better-tempered and cleverer girl isn't to be found in London. And although our family are rather down on their luck just now, still my father was an officer in the army—as I ought to be too by rights—and my mother belonged to a first-rate family, granddaughter to an Irish peer, and all the rest of it; and Hilda has been brought up to have the best of everything, and has had a tip-top education." By which periphrasis the young gentleman meant to convey that he considered the match a suitable one on both sides, and one, too, that would receive the approval of himself and the family. "But I won't detain you any longer, Mr Clifford; I shall hear about you, no doubt?" (this was said slyly,) "and you shall hear from me too. I shan't forget my friends when I am up in the world, I promise you;" and with a little more to the same effect, and a clumsy expression of thanks, the youth took himself out of the room,

leaving its occupant covered with confusion.

"So the family expect this already!" he said to himself. "And doubtless Hilda expects it herself. Even that lout thinks better of me than I deserve, and takes a higher view of my duty than I do myself. Even from him I am to be taught lessons of morality. And no doubt the world would think that I was plotting to get the brother out of the way. Yet I am greatly mistaken if this brother would be much of an obstacle, even if he were to stay at home. But everything depends on Hilda herself. Where and how is all this complication to end?"

As Harry was going down the passage to the entrance, Hilda's door opened. She thought she had heard her brother's voice, and could not resist the impulse to see if he was really the visitor.

"Oh, Harry," she cried, "you here, and after your solemn promise!"

"Now don't begin blowing me up without rhyme or reason, Hilda. I didn't come of my own accord; I came by invitation—by appointment; your governor wrote and told me to come. And what do you think it was for?" And Harry brandished his letters triumphantly before his sister's eyes.

"Hush, Harry, not so loud," she said, as the young man raised his voice. "Come in here, and tell me all about it," and she led

the way into her room and closed the door.

Then Harry told her the tale of his good fortune. "To sail on Friday, think of that! I must be off sharp to the agent, and take my passage, and get my outfit—there's no time to lose. I hope you will come home early this afternoon, Hilda—there will be a lot of things for you to do for me. Only fancy being off on Friday! I am sorry I shan't be able to take you on the river any more, though."

The young man in his exultation had forgotten his shame, till it was recalled by his sister saying sorrowfully, "You cannot suppose I have a wish to go on the river with you any more, after——"

"I must be off sharp," interrupted Harry, trying to look unconcerned. "But, I say, there's one thing—it's quite evident what your swell friend is driving at; he doesn't do all this, you know"—holding up the letters—"for nothing, and putting Arthur to a slap-up school, too; it's all on your account, evidently: you will be giving me a brother-in-law soon, I can see with half an eye. And a very good fellow to have in the family too, with all his money, and so free about spending it, but he's rather a solemn customer for a man of his age. I declare I felt quite on my p's and q's with him, and I am not one to be put down easily either. But I mustn't stop talking here. Mind you come home as soon as you can this afternoon."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Hilda had time after her brother's departure to regain her composure before Clifford came to her room.

"Did you see your brother?" he asked; "I think I heard you speaking to him?"

"Oh, sir," cried Hilda, "what can I say? How can I thank you?"

"There is no need to thank me, Hilda; you know I don't like thanks."

"Yes, but this is almost too

much; I can't help thanking you," and Hilda put up her hand to check the involuntary tears. Clifford thought she looked more charming than ever. There was a tenderness in her manner when thus moved, which usually was the only thing wanting.

"Why may I not gratify my inclinations in my own way?" he said. "After all, it does not really cost me anything. You know my rule for laying out my income—all but a fixed reserve. The money which will start your brother in the world would have been spent on some one else. The real loser is therefore some unknown individual, who probably would not have deserved the good office a bit more than your brother."

"I hope Harry may indeed come to deserve the kindness by-and-by."

"After all, not to be hypocritical, I was not thinking so much about the brother as the sister. You must know that."

"Ah, Mr Clifford, how can I show the gratitude I feel for all your goodness to us?"

"By giving yourself to me!" he was about to reply, but stopped short with the words unsaid. Even now the answer, if what he wanted it to be, might be dictated by simple gratitude. How be sure that she would take him simply for his own sake? And even yet he had not made up his mind clearly on which side the sacrifice should be. How, then, till this point was settled, prevent his words from being misunderstood?

He turned the matter aside by saying, "I have been acting from the most self-interested motives. My secretary has too much on her hands. Her family cares have evidently been too heavy. I want to keep her little head fresh and bright for her proper work. Now to business."

"Yes, to business," said Hilda, greatly relieved at this turn to the conversation. There were several letters on the table, and they went through them together, Hilda suggesting the replies in most cases, and Clifford assenting, as was now usually the practice. Then they took up the plan of his sanatorium at the seaside, to which he was proposing to add a children's ward. He spread out the drawings on the table, and they sat down side by side to look over them. It was a habit with Clifford to spend a long time over the plans of any works he had undertaken, studying them and suggesting alterations, often so numerous that the designs would be hardly recognisable by the architect when they came back to him. What gave the occupation an additional zest now was that it was carried on in close propinquity to Hilda. As they stooped over the drawings, their heads would almost touch; as they took measurements with the compasses, their hands would now and then meet, each contact sending through Clifford a little thrill of excitement. "How long," thought he, "is life with Hilda to be merely a stolen joy? When will the day come that I may call her my own? And this contact will lose none of its sweetness by use! The more Hilda can be herself free from restraint, and feel herself on an equality with me, the more charming and gracious will she be. And for myself, too, there will be some gain of the same kind. The restraint I am under must make me all the more awkward in her eyes."

To-day he was more dilatory and undecided than ever in dealing with the business he professed to be employed on—putting questions and suggesting objections for her to answer. While she was talking he hardly dared to look her

in the face—he was watching the taper fingers as they rested on the drawing.

“Do you know,” he said suddenly, “I am reminded of the first day of your coming here. It was the sight of your pretty hands that made me know what sort of a person you were.”

“Really,” said Hilda, blushing and laughing, and withdrawing her hand from its conspicuous position.

“Yes; your dress was shabby, and your poor little feet were clad in muddy old boots; and I thought, perhaps, you were some female Cockney from a telegraph office, or something of that sort. You know you had your veil down at first, so it was not altogether my fault that I was so stupid; but then, do you remember, I asked you to give me a specimen of your composition, and you had to take off your glove to write, and I saw your slender hand, so soft and delicate, and then I began to suspect that I had gained a prize? The owner of that little hand must be refined and nice. I could not tell everything at once, you know, could I? I got to know your worth only by degrees. Do you remember that first day?”

“How can you ask such a question?” replied Hilda, again laughing, but not looking up at him. “Of course I do.”

“And do you remember how I put you off at first, and how many difficulties I made about taking you into my employment? Ha, ha! into my employment. Yes; that sounds well. What a suspicious crusty fellow you must have thought me!”

“You were quite right to be particular. I am sure it was very good of you to accept me on trust as you did.”

“There is always an element of risk when one takes a great step in life, and this was a great step, wasn’t

it? It has given a new colour to my life, as I am sure it has to yours. But even when the plunge is taken,” he continued, “all the doubt is not got rid of, although the risk may be—or rather, the difficulty is that new doubts arise in our path. And besides, as we move along, we are always enveloped in an atmosphere of uncertainty as to what those about us may be thinking and feeling. We hardly know our own minds, how much less the minds of others!”

Hilda remained silent, and he went on—

“How can you tell, for example, what I really think about you? And am I not equally in the dark about your feelings towards me?”

He had not finished the sentence before he felt ashamed of himself: it was a cowardly thing to try and throw the burden of a declaration upon her in this way.

“Don’t you think,” said Hilda, looking distressed and confused, “that we had better be getting on with our work? You know these plans ought to go back to Mr Plummet this evening.”

“Mr Plummet be hanged! I am sick and tired of Plummet and his works; I am tired of all work. Why is my life and yours to pass in pottering over these grovelling details?”

“Mr Clifford! you cannot be serious?” cried Hilda, equally surprised and relieved by the turn to the conversation.

“Yes,” he continued, hardly noticing her interruption; “life passed in this sort of way seems such a poor tame affair.”

“How can you say so? No; you don’t really mean it. You say it merely for the pleasure of being contradicted. You know that you could not have chosen a more noble occupation.”

“The aim is all very well, no

doubt; but think what a poor creature the agent becomes in the doing of it. No; I have begun too soon. This sort of thing might be all very well if I had settled down to it after having seen the world, and lived a life; but human nature will out. Don't you feel sometimes the baldness of it all, and that it is all weariness and vanity?"

"I am never so happy as when at work here."

"Ah, but you are a woman, and I am a man! And why should I not have a spice of the devil in me, like other men? This life is all too strait-laced and conventional. I want to have done with it, and learn what real pleasure is."

His companion looked at him with surprise and almost with fear. He seemed to be suddenly so altered. His face was flushed,—his voice was hoarse with excitement.

"You wonder to see me like this," he said. "Don't you know, Hilda, that you are the cause?"

He seized her hand as he spoke. They had been sitting close together, side by side, facing the table, but Clifford had turned himself round in his chair, and, leaning an elbow on the table with his head resting on the hand which passed restlessly through his hair, had seized Hilda's hand with the other. She had been watching his face till something in the eager expression of his eyes made her avert her own. Just at this moment a sudden noise caused Clifford to turn round and his companion to look up. Mrs Scallan and Blanche were standing in the open doorway, and immediately behind them Jane the maid, whose look of alarm towards her master signified that she was not responsible for the appearance of the visitors without announcement.

Clifford started to his feet. His aunt, open-mouthed with astonish-

ment, remained speechless. Blanche looked scornful and amused.

Clifford was the first to speak. Usually shy and slow to find words, the crisis gave him self-possession.

"How do you do, aunt?" he said, advancing to shake hands with her. "How do you do, Blanche? You quite startled me."

"So it appears," said Blanche, making a slight bow and declining the proffered hand. "Don't you see, mamma, that we are intruding?" and sweeping round, she made as if about to move off.

"Not in the least," replied Clifford, now more disconcerted than he was at first, but still feeling much less bashful than was usual with him. "But let me introduce you ladies to each other: Miss Reid, this is my aunt; this is my cousin, Miss Scallan; Miss Reid.

Hilda, who had remained sitting while this conversation was going on, rose and bowed to the ladies, blushing scarlet as she did so,—partly from shame at the situation, partly because of their disdainful manner towards her. Mrs Scallan, who was still too much astonished to find words, made a very slight acknowledgment of her bow. Down-trodden as the good lady was in her own house, here was an opportunity for asserting her superiority to some one else, of which she could not but take advantage. Blanche, on the other hand, usually so disdainful, now suddenly changed her manner, and made a low curtsy,—so marked and formal, however, that any one acquainted with the young lady would have at once interpreted it as intended for mock civility. And yet Miss Blanche's present feelings towards Hilda were by no means those of contempt, or even aversion. Her ready wit, and mind well stored with French romances, had at once filled in the picture of her cousin's rela-

tions with his companion, based on the two glimpses she had seen of them, and she had now formed a sudden conclusion on the case, as to the accuracy of which she entertained no doubt for the moment, nor wanted further confirmation of. Her suspicions about her cousin being thus, as she supposed, completely verified, he rose rather than fell in her estimation. Blanche was so beautiful herself that she could afford to recognise beauty in others. This girl is not at all in my style, she thought; but she is pretty enough, and probably clever: and the notion of stepping in between them, and putting an end to the *liaison*, gave a piquancy to the situation. There would be something more to do than simply to accept her cousin. She would have to require him to break off this connection, and to see that it was not renewed. The idea of winning him to herself did not occur to her. Rather this knowledge would give her a hold over him, or even would leave her free as himself to take her own line, if the marriage ever came off.

And Blanche's thoughts also at the same time ran off upon the possibility of an escape from that alternative.

But then, as she looked again at her rival, and marked her guileless face, and its composed and dignified expression, a new idea suddenly burst on her as to the probable relations between the two.

An awkward pause of silence followed the introduction, broken at last by Clifford.

"Miss Reid and I were engaged upon these plans: they are for a hospital I am interested in. Miss Reid has had a great deal of experience in such matters, and has been good enough to give me the benefit—of her advice about them."

"A hospital, is it, that you

were so interested in?" said Mrs Scallan, at last finding her voice; "you certainly were interested, and no mistake. I suppose," she added, turning towards Hilda, "that it was in the nursing way you gained your experience about hospitals?"

"Nonsense, mamma!" interrupted Blanche, who had seen at once what Mrs Scallan, in her indignation, had failed to perceive, that Hilda was quite as much of a lady as herself; "how can you be so absurd? I should like to see the drawings very much; I don't understand much about these things, but I daresay they are very interesting." And Blanche drew near to the table.

"It is a proposal to add a ward to a cottage-hospital," said Clifford, by way of explanation, and feeling very grateful to his cousin for thus coming to the rescue. "It is a small affair, you see, but still these things take time and trouble to work out. I have promised to contribute towards the building, and so the plans have been sent here for my opinion."

Clifford rattled on in this fashion, hoping to find in some way an escape from the awkwardness of the situation. Blanche, while professing to listen, was furtively looking round the room as she bent over the drawings, to see how much could be inferred from the appearance of the place. She could not see Hilda, who was standing behind her, trying to look composed under the fixed stare of Mrs Scallan.

Presently that lady accosted Hilda.

"How long have you been living here?"

She did not say this in a loud voice, but Clifford, all whose senses were on the strain, heard it, and turning round said, "I am afraid, aunt, this sort of thing does not

have much interest for you, and I am keeping you standing all this time. It is too bad to treat you so when you do my chambers the honour of a visit." Then turning to Hilda—"I do not think I need detain you any longer, Miss Reid; thank you very much. If you will have the goodness to leave the drawings here, I will write and propose another appointment. Come along, aunt, into the other room;" and taking her by the hand he led her out, the lady being still too much under the influence of astonishment to make any resistance. Blanche followed, throwing as she passed out a searching look at her rival, and making her a low bow.

As soon as they reached Clifford's own room at the end of the passage, Mrs Scallan turned round and accosted him—"Robert, tell me how long this has been going on? I claim to know," she continued; "I have a right to know. How long has this been going on?"

But Blanche came again to the rescue. "La, mamma," she exclaimed, "how silly you are! you might as well ask Robert how long he has had his servants. Young ladies go into all sorts of business nowadays, and why not? I don't think you have any right to be teasing Robert with foolish questions."

"But I have not the least objection to answer my aunt," said he, "thanking you all the same, Blanche. Miss Reid has been assisting me for some three or four months past,—in fact, ever since you have been in England, and a little longer. She has been acting as a sort of agent and private secretary in some rather complicated business."

"But why have you never told us a word about her being a sort of agent and private secretary, and

your complicated business before?" objected Mrs Scallan. "Why is there all this mystery and concealment about the matter?"

"You did not appear interested about such things. But there has been no concealment about the matter,"—here his conscience whispered that he was prevaricating,—
"Simmonds could tell you as much if you liked to ask her. But now, having given you this explanation, aunt, let me ask that there may be an end of these insinuations, which it is impossible to misinterpret, and which are as disagreeable to myself as they would be to the object of them. Miss Reid is a lady of good birth and education, although her family are just now in reduced circumstances, and she is able to support her father and brother,—her brothers indeed, there are two of them on her hands at present—one of them has been here all the morning, and has just left us; she is able to support the whole family in this way, which she could not possibly do as a governess. Pray let there be nothing more said that ought not to be said."

Clifford spoke with an air of determination such as his aunt had never seen him display; and this, with the snubs administered so freely by her daughter, silenced the lady's objections, although she could not but recollect the lover-like appearance of her nephew at the moment of her surprising him.

Clifford now tried to divert the conversation into another channel, while straining his ear to catch the sound of Hilda's departing footsteps. But after what had passed, the conversation could not but be forced and stiff, and in a short time Blanche rose and gave the signal for departure, saying that she and her mother had an appointment to keep.

Clifford handed them into their

carriage below, and it was with a great sense of relief that he saw them drive off, returning up-stairs to his chambers to muse over the exigencies of his altered position.

"I don't believe a word about her being a private secretary, or a secretary of any sort," said Mrs Scallan to her daughter as they drove off, the recollection of the very love-stricken aspect of the two at the moment when she surprised them suddenly returning in full force. "To think that Robert, of all men, should be playing such a trick upon us; him that one would have thought butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. But I will find out the truth about it before I am a day older. I'll get it out of Simmonds; she will be sure to know all about it."

"You are quite on the wrong tack," observed Blanche, calmly reclining on her seat; "the real state of the case is plain enough."

"What, Blanche! do you mean to say there is nothing between Robert and that girl?"

"There is a great deal between them, but not what you suppose. They are evidently married."

"Married!" cried her mother.

"Not a doubt of it," said Blanche, with an air of assurance. "Miss Reid would not have been so self-assured if she was less than his wife—for she is evidently quite a lady, and I daresay a good little thing enough, although there is not much style about her. But they have not been married long, of course, or Robert would not have been so lover-like in his attentions;" and it was not without bitterness that Blanche thought he had never made himself so attractive to her. "They are still in the blissful honeymoon stage," she added, with a sneer. "Now of course we can understand Robert's behaviour—his playing hot and

cold, and all the rest of it. He did not intend to jilt me at first, but the lady's attractions proved too strong for the faithless man." Blanche spoke in jest, but not without a tinge of bitterness, as she thought that this explanation was really true.

"I have it!" cried Mrs Scallan, suddenly; "why, it's the same young woman I saw him handing into a hansom cab that day at the Euston Station. I knew I had seen the face somewhere before. Now I remember it perfectly. He said she was a lady of his acquaintance who had been travelling up in the same train. I thought Master Robert was very attentive to her."

"Perhaps they had been down to spend the honeymoon at Ashham."

"Ah, I shouldn't wonder; he said he had been there; so he did. Of course that was it. And to think that he should be taking us out on the river the very next day, and making believe to be so sweet on you, and he just come from spending his honeymoon at Ashham. Ashham indeed!" cried the lady, raising her voice. "He may well go to Ashham for his honeymoon; it won't be his much longer to go to. Why, Blanche, if Robert has really married this girl, every farthing of your uncle's money comes to you. And only right and proper that it should. I shall never forget the day when your uncle first let us know that he had a son,—a bastard kept out of the way all those years, as well it might be, and he pretending to be such a recluse, and to hate women's society, and every one led to believe till the last moment that you would be his heir. And now Master Robert himself goes and springs a mine on us. Like father, like son, I think; but this time you gain a fortune instead of losing it."

CHAPTER XXV.

"Only think, William! Robert has been and gone and got married already!"

This remark was addressed to Mr Scallan, whom his wife on her return found in the writing-room, and where she would not have ventured to disturb him but for the excitement aroused by the discovery.

Mr Scallan, who was engaged in writing, looked up impatiently with a dazed expression as if he had not heard what she said, and his wife repeated her news. "Only think of Robert being such a sly fellow," she continued, "to go and get married in this way without telling us a word about it!"

Mr Scallan, as soon as he had taken the news in, showed no surprise. He was too much accustomed to daring strokes of business, and to great *coups*, made by himself or those with or against whom he was associated, to be subject to much excitement about things already disposed of. He could be active and wary enough while a great stroke of business or speculation was in course of execution, but in his busy life of shifts and expedients there was no time for stopping to think about what was past and gone. The future and the present occupied all his attention, and although he was not in his way without affection for his daughter, and alive to her interests, just at the present moment he had quite enough to occupy him in his own affairs. After looking at his wife in an absent way for a minute he said—

"Married, is he? How did you find it out?"

"We have just been to his chambers and seen the girl, to be sure; the sly fellow."

"I don't see the slyness," interrupted Scallan, "if he has his wife to live with him openly."

"I don't know that she is living with him, exactly. He gave us to understand that she was not. In fact, he did not acknowledge her as his wife at all. He pretended that she was a sort of agent and private secretary in some rather complicated business. Complicated business indeed! What business has he to go and get married without telling us a word about it?"

"But how do you know that he is married?"

"We don't know it—at least not for certain; but Blanche says she is sure about it, from their manner, and everything. That's what I say is so sly about it."

Mr Scallan shrugged his shoulders impatiently. "Suppose it is so," he said—"and you are just as likely to be wrong as right—how are you to prove it? If Robert is so sly, as you call him, he will have kept the proof back. I don't see how you are to set about bringing it home to him." And he took up his pen again with a gesture of irritation.

"Then don't you mean to do anything in the matter, William? Think of the wrong done to Blanche! Is she to be treated like this, and him to come off scot-free? Your own child, William, to be treated in this way! Made love to as if he were ready to fall at her feet, and then to be thrown over for this chit of a girl, and just when it is close on the time named in the will. Surely you don't mean to let Robert fly in the face of the will, and get off scot-free?" And the poor lady began to cry.

"You are talking like a goose, Molly. I am quite as capable of

looking after Blanche's interests as you are,—leave those to me. But her interests are safe enough. You must give Robert the appointed time. He has still more than three months to run," continued Mr Scallan, speaking of his nephew as if he were a bill of exchange; "and at the end of that time, if he holds off still from claiming Blanche, the game is ours,—married or single, he loses the game. There will be nothing gained by hurrying. And now be off with you, Maria, for I am very busy." And Scallan turned to the papers before him.

Mrs Scallan moved to the door. Having got so far she could not help turning round to look at her husband. Full though she had been of her news, she had not failed to notice his haggard looks. She was accustomed to see him under various aspects, during the various ups and downs of his speculative life; sometimes on the point of realising a fortune, and spending lavishly in every direction—at others reduced to the last shifts to keep his head above water. Hitherto he had always been cheery and high-spirited, even during his reverses; but now he looked worn and desponding, such as she had never seen him look before.

She stood watching him, but not daring to speak. Cold and inconsiderate as he had always been to her, yet the poor woman clung to him with dog-like affection. He treated her even worse than her daughter did, and she cared for him even more than for her daughter.

Scallan seemed unconscious of her presence, and went on writing; then suddenly he threw down his pen, and getting up, began his accustomed walk up and down the room, with his hands in his pockets. As he made his first turn, he saw his wife at the other end of the room.

"You here still?" he said, angrily;

"what are you hanging about me for?"

"Oh, William," she cried, anxiety keeping down her tears, "I couldn't help it, to see you looking like that!"

"Do I look so very glum?" he said; "that won't do. But it's enough to make a fellow look rather flat, Molly, I can tell you. When a man stood to win a hatful, as I did a month ago, it comes rather hard not knowing which way to turn for a few beggarly hundreds! If the market had only kept up for another week or two, I should have been right enough, and I could have pulled something out of the fire. But everything's going down and down so damnably. There never was anything like it; and people over here are so infernally cautious, there is no getting up a spurt. But never fear, I've got a kick or two left in me yet." And he stamped on the ground as if in desperation, and resumed his restless walk up and down like a caged wild animal.

"I'm so glad to hear it," said his wife, not clearly knowing what he meant, but her experience filling in the broad outline of the case. "But oh, William, when it comes to the going, you'll take me with you, won't you?"

"What do you mean?" he asked, although he knew quite well what she meant.

"Why, you won't go off again and leave me and Blanche alone, will you? I can't be of much use, I know. I don't care a bit about being badly off, so long as we are together, but I can't bear the being left alone. Oh, William, I don't think you know what I went through when you left us at San Francisco that time. It wasn't the shame of the thing, and the being left without any money, and I don't say it was your fault; it was the not knowing

what had become of you, and the being all alone, with no one to advise, and thinking that perhaps you might have——”

“Made away with myself? No, Molly, my girl, that’s not in my line. ‘But he who fights and runs away, may live to fight another day.’ I have got a kick left in me, even if things do look a bit queer just now. But now, Molly, be off with you—there’s a good girl; my time is precious.”

He said these last words in a manner so unusually gentle, that his wife, had she been closer to him, would fain have thrown herself on his breast, and given loose to her feelings in an outburst of tears; but separated from him by the whole length of the room, her courage failed her. She merely said, “If you won’t go without telling me all about it, I don’t mind what happens, William,” and left the room.

CHAPTER XXVI.

An hour later, as Mr Scallan was still at work, a servant announced that Captain Burrard had called. The man had said that his master was engaged, but the Captain wished him to bring word that he had come on particular business, and Scallan ordered the visitor to be shown in.

No one would have now detected in Scallan’s face the signs which had alarmed his wife. He looked worn and tired, as a man may well be who is always engaged on great concerns; but to Burrard, who believed him to be highly prosperous, there was nothing in his appearance to belie the assumption.

“I am sorry to interrupt you when you are so busy, Mr Scallan,” said Burrard, opening the conversation.

Scallan glanced rapidly over the table to satisfy himself that all the papers were concealed which he did not wish a visitor to see, as he replied, “Well, sir, I am mostly pretty busy, and that’s a fact. But I am always pleased to see you.”

“It is very good of you to say so; and as I wanted to trouble you for a few minutes, I thought one time would be as good as another.”

“Quite so, sir, and I am always glad to see you at any time.”

“Well, Mr Scallan, to come to business at once. You are a thorough man of business, and your time is valuable, so I won’t beat about the bush. I have troubled you with a call in consequence of some remarks you let fall last night after dinner.”

“Indeed, sir! what were they?” and Scallan could not restrain an involuntary flush. He knew that he had taken a good deal of wine, although he was not conscious of having drunk too much; still he might have spoken incautiously, and for the moment feared that he might have committed himself.

“You may remember that I expressed a wish to go into your line of business, and you were good enough to say that you thought you could give me a helping hand. Now I daresay you thought I was in joke, but I was really quite in earnest. Business has been my amusement so far, but I want a larger field. Of course I can’t expect to launch out on your grand scale all at once—there must be a beginning to everything; but I believe you would find I have a pretty good head for business; and I should be ready to go into anything with you that’s all fair and above-board. And so, as I

know that you are the sort of man who is here one day and gone the next, I thought I would strike while the iron is hot."

Scallan was not without a sense of humour. It was part of his cool temperament which had often stood him in good stead; and, while greatly relieved to find that he had not let out any secret, he could not help being amused at the other having hit off unconsciously his probable conduct. But now to answer him.

Had Burrard come at a more favourable time he would gladly have taken him into his confidence then and there—at any rate into partial confidence. Scallan was quick at judging character, and at coming to a resolution, and he thought that his visitor would be just the sort of man to prove useful; his title, too, would be in his favour, especially on the other side of the water. But all he could do now was to put Burrard off without a specific refusal, while keeping up appearances.

"You speak like a man of business, Captain," he replied; "in fact, you are quite one of the right sort, I can see. I don't often make mistakes about men, and I can see that much about you already."

"Thank you very much. I am very glad to find you are so favourably disposed. Now the question is, how can I, with your kind help, turn my poor talents to the best account?"

"Yes, that's the point," replied Scallan slowly, and looking thoughtfully before him as if he were revolving in his mind what would be best to propose for a beginning.

"You have a number of big things going, I have no doubt," suggested Burrard, after a pause.

"No doubt at all. Some very big things; enough to make your fortune as well as mine, any one of

them. The times are not very favourable just now for commercial enterprise, as of course you know. The money market is rather tight, and there is a want of confidence generally in the business world. It is rather a time for nursing business than for pushing it. All that we can do just now is to be ready to go ahead as soon as things begin to mend a bit."

"Exactly so; that is just my own experience from my own small dabblings in financial waters. But I suppose that a slack time like this is just the one in which to make preparations, so as to be ready, as you say, to take advantage of a more sanguine and healthy spirit among the investing public."

"Now," thought Burrard, "I have surely shown my hand plain enough. He must understand that I am prepared to go into this line straight through, as he himself would put it."

"Quite right, sir—quite right," replied Scallan; "I see you understand what business means. I am just thinking how I can put you in the way of going to work at once. You don't propose, I conclude," he added, "to bring much capital into the business?"

"No, my dear sir, I am practically a pauper, as I gave you to understand yesterday; a younger son, in fact, and the trifle I have is all locked up. The capital has yet to come, I hope, under your good auspices."

"Quite so," replied Scallan; "after all, the want of such a little capital as a man like you might bring doesn't much matter. In my large way of doing business a few thousand pounds more or less don't signify one way or the other."

It was almost a satisfaction to Scallan to know that the other had no money. He felt that he should not have been able to restrain him-

self from trying to make use of it, with the possible result of a premature exposure.

"Well," resumed Mr Scallan, presently, "I am really very much obliged to you for your kind proposal, Captain, and if I can serve you I will; but you must give me a day or two to think over the matter. Just at this moment I could not say anything positive, but in a day or two I hope to be able to see my way to proposing something definite, and then you shall not fail to hear from me again." And the Captain seeing that there was nothing more to be got from him then, and that Scallan was evidently preoccupied, took his leave, and Scallan returned to the papers before him. In a day or two, unless things took a favourable turn, he would be no longer there to receive the Captain. His visit to England, a last desperate resource,

had so far brought him no good; but meanwhile this last glimpse of the power of his reputation, bringing a swell like the Captain offering to serve under him as a subaltern, was not without its pleasure. "If Blanche had a man like that for a husband, now," he thought, "she would get along much better, than with that prig of a nephew of mine. Poor Blanche! I wish I could stop and see her put square; it would be something to have her comfortably settled and a home made for Molly before I am off again. However, she is safely provided for, whether I am here or not. Whether Robert is married or single is all the same so far as that goes."

But there was no time to pursue the speculation, and presently, stuffing some bundles of papers into his capacious pockets, and locking up the remainder, Mr Scallan sent for a cab, and went off to the City.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Captain Burrard, after quitting Mr Scallan's room, stood in the hall pondering over his interview. It was satisfactory in one sense, considering that he had renewed acquaintance with Mr Scallan only on the previous evening, to have made so much progress; but then what that gentleman had said might mean anything or nothing. The case did not admit of delay. A man like Scallan might be here to-day and gone to-morrow. He had thrown out hints that his visit to England was likely to be short. Here was a chance of striking out in a line which must not be thrown away. He was not insensible to some of the disagreeable consequences that would probably be involved in an alliance with such a man as Scallan; but he was thoroughly tired of his present pur-

poseless life; he was drifting on into middle life with no brighter prospect ahead than the remote possibility of succeeding to the family title. The spirit of speculation was strong upon him. He determined to make a bold stroke for fortune, be the consequences what they might.

While he was standing in the hall occupied with these thoughts, the footman was standing there also. Mrs Scallan's servants were among the most insolent in London, but Burrard was not the sort of man to be impertinent to, and the man stood respectfully enough, waiting to open the door for him.

Burrard suddenly asked to see Miss Scallan — "Miss Scallan, mind, not Mrs Scallan," he said, and followed the man up to the drawing-room.

It was illustrative of the ways of the household that the application to see Miss Scallan caused the servant no surprise. The young lady was in the habit of receiving visitors alone, and would often have three or four young men there of an afternoon. Her mother quite understood what was expected whenever Blanche thought her company might be dispensed with, and would keep away; but if the callers were uninteresting, or included any ladies among them, Blanche would send word to her mother that there were visitors, and Mrs Scallan would obey the summons. When, therefore, on the present occasion, Burrard found the drawing-room unoccupied, while the servant went off to announce his arrival to Miss Scallan, he felt pretty sure that the interview would not be interrupted.

Blanche's manner towards Burrard was always very different from that which she was wont to assume with her cousin. In fact, the position in the two cases was reversed. While she snubbed Clifford, Burrard snubbed her. In a pleasant way, no doubt: while snubbing her he yet expressed sufficient admiration to put her on good terms with herself; but it was done in a patronising fashion—there was no appearance of being fascinated by her beauty, such as poor Robert had manifested at one time; rather Burrard gave her to understand that he sought her society as an agreeable relaxation from the restraint of the more conventional circle in which he was accustomed to move. She knew that he thought her father and mother vulgar, and her set underbred; it was a testimony to her own attractions that he should seek her out notwithstanding. She could hardly dare hope that Burrard wanted to marry her—his manner had never been sufficiently serious; but she was

quite aware that his elder brother had no children and was in delicate health, and that Burrard's wife might be Lady Mount Burrard any day, and ultimately Countess of Chertsey. To be not only an English peeress, but head of that particular family, and able to patronise the sisters-in-law—the merest prospect of such delights was better than the certainty of sharing a fortune with her cousin. Blanche quite understood that such civilities as the ladies of the family had shown her had been given against the grain, and had taken really the form of cutting slights; and although she did not particularly resent what seemed to her natural behaviour, there would be keen enjoyment in making a return. To be sure, the very fact that Burrard had a chance of succeeding to the earldom made a misalliance—such as she knew a marriage with herself would be—all the less probable. But it was a delicious picture to contemplate.

Thus had stood the case with Blanche. So far as she was capable of loving, she was in love with Burrard, and would have been ready to throw over her cousin and his fortune if he would have her. But now that the fortune was hers, she would present a different aspect in Burrard's eyes, and even as regarded by his family. She had hardly thought out all the consequences of her changed position when Burrard was announced; but she came down-stairs radiant with hope, although quite unprepared to find that he had come this morning with any particular purpose.

It was characteristic of the relations existing between the two, that Burrard, who was sitting in a low chair looking at some photographs, did not rise until Blanche had come across the whole length

of the long drawing-room, and was standing close to him. Then he got up and shook hands with her in a friendly way. Blanche, too, was quite natural. She had long ago given up affectation of manner with him, from seeing the cynical smile of amusement with which he noticed any such manifestation.

"As blooming as ever," was his salutation. "By Jove! I wonder the fortunate cousin can have the fortitude to keep away. But some people don't deserve their luck, do they?"

They were still standing, and he was still holding her hand.

"You seem very anxious about the fortunate cousin, as you call him," said the girl, tossing her head. "But he can take care of himself, I suppose."

"Ah! so there has been another lover's quarrel, has there?" asked Burrard, looking at her with a playful smile. "Here is a man who has got everything man could wish for in a wife—beauty and breeding and a sweet temper, and yet he keeps away from all these charms; he ought to be here, as I am in his place, very improperly, holding this pretty little hand."

"Robert has other hands to hold," said Blanche, pouting, and withdrawing her own. "And why do you chaff me in this way? You know quite well I am not sweet-tempered."

"You are always sweet-tempered to me, and as long as that is so, you may be as saucy to the rest of the world as you please. There is something so fresh and ingenious in these little outbursts. But seriously, what has gone wrong between you and Clifford? He is a friend of mine, you know: I am bound to stand by him, and scold you if you have behaved badly to him. For you can be a very naughty little thing if you like."

Blanche, it may be observed, was very nearly as tall as the speaker.

"But come, tell me," he continued, composedly, although not feeling as composed as he looked, "what has been going between you two? Faults on both sides, I will be bound?"

"You need not trouble yourself about Robert Clifford any more," she said, "as far as I am concerned. Of course it does not make any difference to you, but he is married already."

"Married! What! surely not to the little girl we were talking about?"

Blanche replied by nodding her head. She felt more excited than was usual with her, and more moved. She was almost ready to cry, and could not find words at the moment.

Burrard, too, was astonished, but he was immediately seized with a feeling of elation. He had been going to propose what he knew to be a mean action. But now the way was clear,—he could strike out without hurting his friend.

"When did you learn this?" he asked.

"Only this morning. I might have guessed it before from——"

"From his indifference to you?" he suggested, helping her out of the sentence which she did not finish, not wishing to pose in the light of a damsel forsaken.

"Clifford has acted like a sensible man," he observed, presently.

"What do you mean?" she said, with a look of anger.

"You have answered me with that pretty little face of yours," he replied, sitting down on the low chair before her, and looking up at her. "Blanche, my child, don't you see that you would have been too much for him. And that is never a happy domestic state, believe me, in which the wife gets the better of the husband. Now

you would have been too much for Clifford. For all you are so sweet and gentle, you might at times have been a little too much for him, and that would not have been a happy state of things. Of course I don't pronounce on his worldly wisdom in renouncing his fortune; but even that might be retained at too heavy a cost. And it would have been a sad thing to throw yourself away, wouldn't it?"

"Is this all you have to say to me?" said Blanche, now tearful with vexation, and hardly able to speak.

Burrard sat for a few seconds longer looking up at the young lady, then he rose, and standing close to her said—

"Always lovely and charming, Blanche, whether in smiles or tears, but you look best smiling. How shall I bring the smile back?" And he took her hand again.

The girl let him hold it without making any resistance, but looking away from him with a pouting lip.

"Come, Blanche, my child, I want to see you look yourself again. I want to make you look happy: that is, if I am the one destined to make you so. Come, Blanche, the time has arrived for a regular declaration, hasn't it? To be or not to be?" And as he spoke, he drew her to him, and put his arm round her waist. "Come, my little woman," he continued, as she still remained silent, with averted face—"why, what is it she is still after? Has she no consideration for my bashfulness? Won't she give her poor timid lover the least bit of encouragement?"

Blanche looked round as if afraid of his sarcastic smile. "You are laughing at me still, I think; what do you want me to say? You seem to have settled it all by yourself?"

"Then she does consent! She will be my little wife! Coy though she is, her feelings betray her. Come

along, my pretty one, and let us seal the compact," he continued, drawing her closer to him, and covering her with kisses: "the prettiest, shyest, sauciest, most engaging little thing in London. By Jove! Blanche," he went on, more coolly, releasing her for the minute, and standing back to look at her with his hands in his pockets,— "you have beauty and talent, and wit enough to hold your own against any of them. They shan't snub you any more, my child, now that we are going to make a match of it. You shall hold up your head with the best of them, I promise you. And you have money enough, too, at least for a beginning."

"That's why you want to marry me, perhaps," replied Blanche, saucily, but looking very pleased and radiant.

"Now don't you be a little goose, because you know better. Your handful of money is well enough in its way, but it would be merely genteel beggary, after all, with such an extravagant little girl as you are. No, no, Blanche; my aspirations go higher than to live upon your pin-money. I mean to be a millionaire. Nature endowed me with a genius for finance, which only wants an opportunity for development. I am going to join your father in business. He is going to let me have a share in some of his great doings.

Blanche gave an involuntary start of surprise. Her mother, without actually making a confidante of her, had thrown out hints constantly since Mr Scallan's arrival of what she had learnt about the desperate state of his affairs. Could it be that her mother had been unconsciously exaggerating? Blanche had not allowed herself to be made more than a little uneasy by these alarms, but still to find that there was no foundation for them added to the pleasure of the moment.

Burrard went on: "I haven't exactly made any arrangement with your father yet, and that's the point I am coming to. Your father is a very busy man,—here to-day, and gone to-morrow. He probably won't stay long in England, even to grace our nuptials; yet it would look awkward if the head of the house were not present to give the lovely bride away, wouldn't it?"

Blanche's bright eyes looked eagerly at her lover—she had not yet made out what he was driving at. He continued: "Then, you see, my people would have to be thought of. There would be a lot of forms to be gone through. Weddings have not been too numerous in our family,"—here his listener's thoughts went off naturally to the plain Ladies Emmeline and Gwendoline Burrard,—“and my people would want to make a fuss about such an event; and all this would take time. And then there would be a certain awkwardness in the *rapprochement* between the two families. Your father is a man for whom I have the highest respect—in a financial and business point of view—and your mother is a most amiable and estimable person; but my people have their foolish prejudices, and might—I am quite plain with you, my child, because I mean you to live down all that sort of nonsense; but you understand there might be a certain amount of unpleasantness at first. The long and short of it is, then, that I think we should do best to make a speedy business of it.”

Blanche looked at him again: she was thinking that it would be much easier than her lover seemed to think to put down her future sisters-in-law. She was a little afraid of Burrard himself, but of his family not a bit,—and the vision of the coming battle and victory

rose up brilliant and alluring before her. And she quite understood what her lover was driving at. But she merely said—

“What do you mean?”

“Why, merely this, that I think it will simplify matters very much if my Blanche will consent to forego the regular preliminaries, and make a short business of it,—Gretna Green, in point of fact, without going there. It's all quite plain sailing. You are now of age, and your own mistress. The thing can be done without a bit of difficulty. The world will suppose that you have run off in this way to escape from your engagement to your cousin. Now I wouldn't do Clifford an injury on any account, but the fact being that everything is off between you and him, there can be no harm in making use of the old engagement to blind the public. Then, once your husband, Mr Scallan will be ready enough to take me into partnership without more ado. Come, my pretty one, what say you to this little game?” and again Burrard drew her to him.

Blanche, as she received his caresses, was tempted for a moment to confide to her lover her suspicion of the baselessness of his hopes of attaining to wealth through the agency of her father. But the fear of losing her lover restrained her; and, as usually happens when one is tempted to do so, there was not wanting the semblance of an excuse to stifle the promptings of her conscience. Her mother had told her what had been said under the bond of secrecy. She must not betray her father even to her future husband; and after all, her mother's fears might have exaggerated the danger. So the word of caution remained unspoken, and Burrard went away, radiant and triumphant, to make the needful arrangements for carrying his plans into execution.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Hilda returned home after the meeting with Blanche and Mrs Scallan in a state of great agitation, her feelings divided between attachment to her employer and benefactor, and shame at the false position in which she found herself. Often had she had occasion to be sensible that the engagement so lightly entered on, and which, in the first instance seemed so simple to carry out, brought her face to face with difficulties at every point, concealments and reserves more and more in violation of her sense of self-respect, to say nothing of those arising from the desire to keep her family from presuming on her employer's kindness. This last difficulty had indeed been disposed of by Clifford in his own generous fashion, but she had never felt so keenly as on this day the degree of degradation involved in her present situation. And when she got home, it seemed as if she could hardly muster up courage to face it again. And yet what choice had she in the matter, when her livelihood depended on working at her business, even if Clifford should consent to the engagement being cancelled without notice? And then, thinking over the present relations between her employer and herself, and unable any longer to profess even to herself ignorance of his feelings towards her, it seemed almost impossible to go again to his house and invite the conclusion of the offer which he was interrupted in making. For, she thought with a thrill of delight, he wants to make me his wife. At one time, indeed, she had been conscious that his language and manner suggested advances of a different sort; but these she had repelled, without injury, as she hoped, to his or

her own self-respect. But this was before they had become well acquainted with each other; such conduct was foreign to his noble disposition, and indignation, she felt, would have been out of place; her own conduct in stepping beyond the bounds of conventional decorum to seek the situation, had perhaps invited a mode of advance which he would never have attempted had he known her as well as he did now. But happily all this had passed away. She could no longer doubt what was the question he was about to ask of her, any more than what answer her heart would dictate; but how go again to his house to invite the declaration? Surely, she thought, he will take the next step, and not place the burden on me; he who is so noble-hearted and generous, and so delicate in the mode of dispensing his generosity, will be delicate and considerate in this too?

Hilda this afternoon had plenty of time for reflection. She had come home earlier than usual, and her father was absent as well as Harry, and neither of them returned till late in the evening. The Captain was first. He was full of his day's work, and could hardly be got to listen with attention to the account of Harry's surprising good fortune. Hilda had quite expected that her father would at once betray impatience to obtain a share of Clifford's good offices for himself; but after a few commonplaces about Harry's luck, and expressing a wish that the youth might prove deserving of it, the Captain proceeded to refer to his own proceedings. He had been to call on Mrs Baker according to promise, and had found that lady very grateful for his services, and very pleased to

see him. "I don't think she is very comfortable at this boarding-house, Hilda," he said. "I mistrust these people in Fitzroy Square. The landlady is evidently a regular shark, and there are one or two other very designing people in the house, or I am much mistaken; and Mrs Baker is so good and simple that she is very easily imposed upon. I gave her some hints on this point which she was good enough to express herself very grateful for. She has a very gentle, loving disposition, but she wants some one to take care of her very much;" and the Captain here indulged in a self-conscious smirk, the meaning of which could not have escaped Hilda if she had been less absorbed in other matters. "I found that Mrs Baker has seen scarcely anything of London sights yet," continued the Captain, "so I proposed to make a beginning at once, and escorted her to Madame Tussaud's. She was delighted with the place, and said she enjoyed it all the more because I was able to explain who the different celebrities were. She said it was quite wonderful, so many distinguished people of different times being all brought together in one room,—and so it is, if you come to think of it. And to-morrow I am to escort her to the Crystal Palace—but I see you are not listening, Hilda; I must say——"

"I beg your pardon, papa; you said something about the Crystal Palace."

"I did, Hilda," replied the Captain, drawing himself up with dignity. "But I have no wish to inflict my affairs on you if they have no interest for you."

"I am very sorry, papa," said Hilda, humbly, "but I have had a fatiguing day, and am very stupid this evening; pray go on."

"I am quite aware, my child, that our present relations place us

—temporarily only, I hope—in a false position towards each other; but I think my own daughter need not remind me in this heartless way of my dependent position," and here the Captain raised his handkerchief to his eyes. "I have been unfortunate, but still I have endeavoured to do my best for my family. I thought to make a confidante of my daughter, and that what concerns her father would interest her too; but of course if she chooses to take her own line, and encourage an estrangement, it is not for me to say nay."

There was more to the same effect. Hilda had never seen him like this before. Except that such a thing could hardly be possible, and had never entered into her experience, it would have seemed as if he wanted to pick a quarrel with her. It was some time before he allowed himself to be coaxed into going on with his story and comments on it, but he took occasion of Hilda's penitent manner to say that he should be obliged to ask her for a small advance. "To be debited to housekeeping account, you know," he said; "it shall all come square out of the housekeeping. But these little trips cost something, for of course I couldn't allow a lady to pay; but I look on it as so much investment of capital."

Harry came home by a late train, very full of his good fortune, and his visit to the docks, and the ship, and his outfit; and although his father tried now and then to bring in an allusion to Mrs Baker and his chivalrous services towards her, the heavy artillery of the young man's loud voice and boisterous manner soon silenced the feeble fire of his father's prattle, and the rest of the evening was devoted to Harry's affairs, and consideration of his outfit.

Next morning Hilda received a note from Clifford. She could not

help feeling a strange sensation of excitement as she opened it, although the small size of the envelope forbade the idea of its containing anything important. It was merely as follows:—

“Your brother will want all your attention up to time of sailing; please take a holiday till Saturday.—R. C.”

So Hilda, announcing that she was at Harry's disposal, offered to accompany him in his day's shopping—for the outfit was not yet complete—and they set off, accordingly, after breakfast. The Captain went up with them to town in the same train, to keep his appointment. He had bought a new hat and a light neck-tie, and with a rose in the button-hole of his best frock-coat, looked quite smart; and although he did not say much on the journey, but read his morning paper diligently, there was a jaunty and self-conscious air about him which neither son nor daughter could avoid noticing.

“I tell you what, Hilda,” said her brother, as they drove away from the station, “it won't be the governor's fault if he doesn't give us a mamma-in-law; that's plain enough. I wish I could have a chance of seeing what the old girl is like before I start. Not that it matters to me much what she is like, or whether he goes and makes a fool of himself, now that I shall be out of this cursed country. I shall be sorry for you, Hilda, of course, if the old girl don't turn out pleasant at home,” he added presently, as it struck him that his remarks might seem a little selfish; “but you will be off the governor's hands soon, you know,—at least he will be off yours, which comes to the same thing,” and the young man laughed at his own wit. Hilda said nothing in reply. Silence was the only effectual way of stopping

Harry's mouth when he was in a boisterous mood, and, fortunately, the noise of the cab rattling over the pavement interfered to prevent further conversation; and all that could be heard was some occasional remark of Harry's, uttered by way of soliloquy, to the effect that life at home had always been infernally slow, and that he was infernally glad to be out of it.

That day passed quickly for brother and sister, and it was evening before they got home. Their father was still later. He arrived on evidently good terms with himself; but when he began to let fall some remarks about what had passed during the excursion to the Crystal Palace, Harry opened such a criticism, in the form of obtrusive giggling, that the Captain, after finding that his attempts to look dignified were in vain as a mode of checking the young man, gave up talking about himself, and turned the conversation to Harry's affairs. And the stratagem was successful. Harry was quite ready to go on talking about the ship and the outfit, and the delights of the life in store for him. He had now tasted the sweets of independence of his father and sister, and was only to be kept in humour by being humoured. He seemed to have quite got over his shame for what had happened only a few nights before; and Hilda, feeling that she had condoned his guilt by admitting him to brotherly terms again, was fain to dismiss the affair as far as she could from her thoughts.

Next day the three went to the docks to see the ship; then some further parts of the outfit had to be got, and a visit was paid on the way home to say good-bye to little Arthur, whose existence Harry had almost forgotten during the excitement of his preparations, till reminded of the obligation by his sister.

The Captain left them after the visit to the outfitter's, pleading an engagement, and the other two set off without him to Richmond, Harry carrying a little bat which, at his sister's suggestion, he had bought as a parting present for Arthur, and the money for which had come out of her pocket.

The next day was devoted by Hilda to packing Harry's things, and again the Captain betook himself to town. "I shall go with you to Gravesend to-morrow, you know," he said, "so you can spare my company for this afternoon."

"All right, sir," replied Harry. "We understand all about it, don't we, Hilda? What a pity the governor won't take us with him to show Mrs Baker what a promising young family she will have, all ready!" Harry was out of hand now, and Captain Reid, after trying to look angry, and then dignified, but without effect, beat a retreat.

Friday came and went. Harry had sailed, his sister and father having accompanied him to Gravesend, where the passengers went on board; and on Saturday morning Hilda went up to town as usual to return again to her work. Captain Reid accompanied her to the station. He said he should have to go up himself by a later train, but would see her off first. He spoke with an air of mystery, and as they walked up the lane appeared uneasy and desirous of relieving himself of some secret. But this manner was presently succeeded by one of self-importance.

"For a few days more you must go on with your duties, Hilda; but not for long, I hope," said he, as the train came up to the platform. "I have other views for you. I do not wish that any daughter of mine should have to work for a livelihood," and so saying, the Captain wagged his head

mysteriously, and waved his hand to her in an unctious manner as she took her seat.

Hilda had been so busy during her holiday in working for her brother that there had been no time to think about what was coming on herself; she had striven, indeed, to put the thing on one side. But it must now be faced. Dwelling with rapture on Clifford's last words and looks, and feeling instinctively that he loved her, she yet remembered uneasily his mysterious reference, on a previous occasion, to the tie which bound him, presaging doubt and difficulty in store. At any rate, even if she had misinterpreted his feelings towards her, she could no longer remain on her old footing in his house. She felt, as she drove from Waterloo to the Alexandra Mansions, that the old happy days of her secretary's life had gone, never to return; a change had passed over her lot; the future had again become vague and uncertain.

Yet as Jane, answering the bell, showed her into her own room, where the table was covered as usual with papers, all the old associations seemed to come back again, and it was with something like lightness of heart that she at once applied herself to her task and endeavoured to drive out all other thoughts by attention to the business before her. Yet she could not help being startled when the door opened. It was a relief to find that the intruder was only Jane. But it was merely a reprieve for what was coming. "Master's compliments," said the maid, "and would she be pleased to step into his room." So the fateful moment had come at last? But was it fair of him, instead of seeking her out, to appoint his own room for the interview?

NORWEGIAN SONNETS.

*To Norroway, to Norroway,
To Norroway ower the faem!*

I.

UP THE SKAGER RACK.

It was the point of dawn ; and in the bow
 I stood alone, facing the grey north-east.
 Far on the left, like a huge brown sea-beast
 That had been chased and was o'ertaken now,
 Stolen on by night, lay Norway. From the prow
 A hissing of salt spray that still increased
 Rose plainly audible—for the gale had ceased
 And the keel cut the sea-plain like a plough.
 And so with only a ripple on the sea,
 And ne'er a storm-cloud o'er us muttering black,
 We voyaged with an easy course and free
 And—disappointing, now on looking back ;
 For the old sagas make the surges flee
 Like riderless horses up the Skager Rack !

II.

THE SCENERY—GO AND SEE IT !

And speak ye may of grandeur and of gloom
 And all the dread magnificence that lies
 Where through the dale the foam-flecked torrent flies,
 Or gorgeous sunsets o'er the mountains bloom.
 But who shall in the sonnet's scanty room
 Set the majestic magnitude, the size,
 The mighty mountains and the widening skies
 Up on Norwegian table-lands assume ?
 This you must see to feel within your heart,
 And cannot know from others : Nature still
 In this defies all imitative art,
 Baffles all schools and soars beyond their skill :
 It is a joy she only shall impart,
 But, once received, it ne'er can cease to thrill.

III.

A TERROR OF THE TWILIGHT.

Far in Norwegian solitudes we strayed :
 Behind us lay a long bright summer day,
 But evening now was stooping o'er our way,
 When, at a sudden turn, alarmed we stayed.
 It was a terror by the twilight made
 Of river, cliff, and cloud, and the weird play
 Of sunset's one live liberated ray
 Piercing the horror of the pine-wood shade.
 Stood, like a charred cross, or a huge sword-hilt,
 Against the sky, above the cliff's black line,
 That seemed a bastion by Harfager built,
 A solitary thunder-blasted pine ;
 On the dark flood below, the sunset spilt
 What now was blood and now was wassail-wine.

IV.

THE CLIMB FROM VALLË.

Steep was the climb from Vallë : far below
 The sæter* we had left lay lost in mist,
 And still the height rose higher than we wist
 Beyond the ravings of the Otteraa.†
 And now a thin bleak air began to blow,
 And now the bispevei‡ to turn and twist,
 Here round a tjern§ no summer ever kissed,
 And there behind a hide of hoarded snow.
 The stars dissolved anon ; and airy trills
 Of wavering music showed the day begun :
 We toiled to meet the morn—o'er rocks, o'er rills ;
 And, breathless but at last, our wish we won—
 The top ! and, lo, a countless herd of hills
 Tossing their shining muzzles in the sun !

* Mountain farm.

† Pronounced Otterø.

‡ Bridle-path.

§ Mountain lake, tarn.

V.

“PAA HEJA :” *Life on the Heights.*

Is there a pleasure can with this compare?—
 To leap at sunrise from your mountain-bed,
 Roused by a skylark revelling overhead,
 And drink great draughts of golden morning air;
 A plunge, and breakfast—simple rural fare;
 Then forth with vigorous brain, elastic tread,
 Hope singing at your heart o'er sorrow dead,
 And strength for fifty miles, and still to spare!
 That joy was ours!—O memory! oft restore us
 Those autumn runs, here in the smoky town,
 When through the woods our mad nomadic chorus
 Rang freedom up and civilisation down!
 Io! my hearts! the world was all before us,
 And we nor owned nor envied king nor crown!

VI.

THE MOUNTAIN LAUREATE.

Morning is flashing from a glorious sun
 On the broad shoulders of the giant fells
 That outreach arms across the narrow dells
 And form a silent brotherhood of one
 Listening their skylark laureate! New begun
 He up the heavens in ever-rising swells
 Carries their thanksgiving in song that wells
 From his small breast as if 'twould ne'er be done.
 What life his music gives them! They are free
 In the wild freedom of his daring wing;
 And in the cataract of his song, the sea
 Of poetry that fills all heaven, they sing;
 —He is their poet-prophet in his glee,
 And in his work and worth their priest and king!

J. LOGIE ROBERTSON.

BEOLCO AND THE 'COMMEDIA DELL' ARTE.'

THE valley of the Arno lay bathed in amber light as our carriage mounted the hill of Mosciano one hot June evening. The reaches of the river looked like molten gold, and islands of salmon-coloured and purple clouds floated leisurely over the sky. In the distance the great dome of St. Mary of the Flowers and Giotto's Campanile rose straight into the warm air. Up in the sequestered village there was an unusual bustle. Every one seemed to be hurrying along towards a queer board shed, hung with canvas curtains, which stood on the slope of a hill, on the road leading over the mountain. Our coachman cast such wistful glances towards this building that we asked what it was. "It is the 'Commedia dell' Arte,'" was his answer.

On lifting the curtain we found ourselves in a small theatre, crowded with peasants of all kinds. There was the blacksmith grimy from his forge, with bare arms, and face beaming with pleased anticipation; there were women carrying funny, stiff-swaddled babies; vine-dressers still holding their pruning-hooks as they had run from their work; all with that air of content and that smile on their faces which only Italy can produce.

We could catch scarcely anything of the words, for the actors spoke too rapidly; but it was a pleasure to watch the eager sun-burnt faces, and to listen to the peals of laughter which came from those big brown chests. They were absorbed in the trickeries of the man in black (probably a species of pantaloon), in the innocent stupidities of the man in white (probably a cousin of Pierrot), and in the constant sallies of wit of a third

person in party-coloured clothing, who seemed to answer to Arlecchino, and whose facetiousness never failed to bring down the house, if one might judge by the shouts with which he was greeted whenever he opened his mouth. It was a very rough and uncouth, but a merry and appreciative, audience.

This performance drew our attention to the 'Commedia dell' Arte,' and set us ransacking old libraries, and hunting up all the snuffy books on the subject, which seemed to become more confusing at every step. But at last our curiosity and patient search were rewarded by meeting, in the chaos of the mask comedy, a forgotten figure, a great dramatist, a precursor of Shakespeare, a sort of Molière of the Renaissance—the Paduan Beolco.

We know scarcely anything of the life of Shakespeare, we know but little of that of Angelo Beolco. He was born at Padua in the year 1502, of an excellent family. Luigi Cornaro (the famous writer on diet, who, as Goldoni expressed it, "lived in bad health for a hundred years in order not to die of disease") took a great fancy to him, and used to invite him to spend his summers at his villa at Codevico, near Padua, where all the clever men of the time were wont to congregate. In the midst of all this talent, it is no wonder that the young Beolco early showed signs of dramatic taste and powers. But being diffident of competing with such men as Bembo, Speron Speroni, and other academic authors who wrote erudite comedies on classic models, he devoted his talents to developing the so-called 'Commedia dell' Arte,'

the unwritten dialect comedy performed by masks, of the petty artisans and peasants. Himself a Paduan, and speaking one of the quaintest of the Venetian dialects, he had many opportunities, while staying at the Villa Cornaro at Codevico, of learning the other *patois* of the country so perfectly that he deceived the very peasants themselves by his imitation of their customs and idioms. He was proud of his nationality, and lost no opportunity of showing the advantages of peasant life, sometimes not much to the credit of the higher classes. In one of his dialogues he remarks in this fashion on the luxury and effeminacy of the rich :—

“Is it not a thousand times better to be contented as we are in the country, to eat good bread, good salted cheese, and to drink fine red wine, than to stuff yourselves with so many sauces, and so many kinds of dishes? You would, in the former case, be as fresh and rosy as apples, whereas you are all enfeebled and sickly. I would be willing to wager that should one of your fine gentlemen come to a passage of arms with one of our women, that he would get the worst of it. And why? Because they are not weakened by luxuries, but are accustomed to natural lives, and living so much in the open air has hardened their muscles and made their skins tough.”

Beolco and three of his friends, Marc Aurelio Alvarotto, Girolamo Zanetti, and Castignola, quick-witted like himself, formed themselves into a little *troupe*, and drew crowds to see them act the comedies which Beolco improvised for them in dialect; and his jokes and *bons-mots* were repeated and spread broadcast through all the villages of the province. He himself played the parts of the fool, and called himself Ruzzante (simpleton); Alvarotto was named Il Menato; Zanetti

was called Il Vezzo; and Castignola was nicknamed Il Bilora.

The buffooneries of Ruzzante were, we are told, so delicious, and his wit so keen, that he became the rage among the Paduans, and when he was on the stage the public neither saw nor heard any one else. At the entreaties of his friends, he wrote out his plays and sketches, six of which, each in five acts and in prose, made their appearance in print after his death in 1542, together with some spirited and witty dialogues and letters to his intimate friends, Cardinals Cornelio and Pisani. His death at the early age of forty, and in the midst of so great promise, was deeply mourned; and the academics of the *Infiammati* and *Elevati* at Padua were black in his honour and memory. His face, judging from the picture which remains of him, shows a melancholy nature, keen observation, cleverness, satire, firmness, and great delicacy of constitution.

His illustrious predecessors, Ariosto, Machiavelli, and Bernardo Dovizi, afterwards Cardinal Bibbiena, are very inferior to him in point of individuality and of novelty. They were not creators of a new style; they merely revived old ideas. They copied the old Greek plays, and never got beyond them, if they ever attained to the power of the original. But Beolco, bold and original, rounded off, completed, and embellished all that he touched and created—a comedy of realities in the midst of the conventional types about him. He seems to have been the first to open the doors of the improvised drama to the different dialects of Italy, and to introduce upon the stage those treasures of the stage, Arlecchino, Brighella, and Doctor Graziano. For the first time the characters of the 'Commedia dell' Arte' were complete. Milan gave the caricature of Meneghino; Messina, the valets; Calabria was

represented by Giangurgolo, Coviello, and Pascariello; Naples had Pulcinella and the Capitano, corresponding to the "Miles Gloriosus" of Plautus. The Venetians furnished the type of the old merchant, sometimes luxurious, sometimes avaricious, vain, and gallant, and thus created Pantalone. From university cities like Bologna came the ridiculous pedant, Doctor Graziano; while Bergamo gave the buffoon servants, Arlecchino and Brighella.

Beolco's actors all speak different dialects — Venetian, Bergamasque, Bolognese, Paduan, Tuscan, and Spanish. He evidently took this idea of mixing the dialects from Plautus, who, it will be remembered, in his comedy of 'Pœnulus,' introduces a Carthaginian speaking his own tongue, and making puns in Latin; Beolco also makes one of his characters speak modern Greek, and make puns in Italian.

He never loses an opportunity of proclaiming the charms of the peasant dialects. In a letter written in Paduan to his friend Cardinal Cornaro the elder, he says:—

"I do not see, as I have chosen peasant types and put them upon the stage, why I should make them speak Tuscan (*in linguazo fiorentinesco*) any more than Egyptian."

"The world goes upside down," he says in another place; "every one wishes to raise his head higher than he can. Nothing is done nowadays according to nature; every one allows himself to be dazzled by the pretensions of his neighbours, instead of remaining simple and natural. They are trying to change the very language, instead of speaking in their own tongues. Every one runs after that which dazzles him, without trying to walk each in his own road;—a bad thing, I say. Shall I do the same? I, who am a Paduan of Italy? (*che a son Piovàn della Italia.*) Shall I make myself Tuscan or French? No, no, I will not do it, by the blood of the cancer!"

Again he says:—

"Let no one among you be surprised to hear me speak to you in a tongue which is not Florentine; I would not exchange my language for any other in the world; I think that I can wish you all health, happiness, fortune, joy, and pleasure, quite as well in my coarse Paduan, as another can in his lighter and finer tongue."

The masquerades of the Carnival, which reigned supreme in Venice, furnished Beolco with the costumes of his actors; and he disguised the natural coldness and unattractiveness of old age by making his old men either figure as Pantaloons or Bolognese doctors, giving them a part more or less ridiculous and important, either as credulous dupes or pompous pedants. Beolco acted the principal characters of his own plays, and always came forward to explain the argument beforehand. Sometimes he would be dressed in allegorical or fantastical costume, and address the public thus:—

"Let us amuse ourselves. Is there any one among you who knows who I am? Perhaps you think that I am Mercury, or some reciter of arguments. Not at all. You will never guess who I am. I will no longer puzzle you. I am a sprite. Do you know why I allow myself to be seen? why I show myself? Do you know whence I come? From the other world; and I will tell you why. One of the spirits there, called Actius by some, Plautus by others, has sent me to tell you that this evening a comedy" (the 'Vaccaria') "will be played, and that you must not blame him that it is not in Latin or in verse, or in fine language, because if he were again on earth, he would write his plays like the one that you are to see acted to-night. He adds that you must not compare those that he wrote with this one; for he swears to you, by Hercules and by Apollo, that they were recited in a different manner from the way in which they are printed to-day, for the reason that many things which sound well on paper, act badly on the stage."

The great charm of Ruzzante's comedies lies in the simplicity of their plots, and the avoidance of all theatrical metamorphoses and clap-trap, such as were in vogue in the '*Commedia sostenuta*' of his day, where men were turned into parrots and horses, as in the plays of Parabosco. With this great simplicity are combined a delicious wit and a keen knowledge of human nature. His fools and jesters are of the wittiest; his captains are ridiculously bombastic and cowardly; and his knaves are clever to a Shakespearian degree. Some of his plays are coarse, after the fashion of the sixteenth century; but they are as white paper against black compared with the written comedies of his time. There are coarse oaths, and speech seasoned with salt (sometimes very strong salt). There are maidens carried off, and courtesans intriguing with all their might; but, unlike his illustrious predecessors Aretino, Machiavelli and Bibbiena, he does not appear to revel in vulgarity and lewdness. His compositions are singularly chaste—remarkably so, at a period when licentiousness prevailed in all dramatic and literary work. He does not revel in filthy plots like those of the "*Calandra*" and the "*Mandragora*;" he is occasionally a little bespattered with the filth of his days, but he never wallows in it like Ariosto and Machiavelli. Ruzzante can be very realistic when he chooses, as well as picturesque and fantastic. His representations of the miseries and temptations peculiar to the precarious and barbarous peasant life of his times, is very powerful; and the picture which he gives in the "*Fiorina*" of the gagging and forcible abduction of a young girl, is probably taken from life, in those times of war, rapine, and violence. But though he expresses himself sometimes after the

brutal and rough manner of the period, he puts those expressions into the mouths of his peasants,—not, at least, into the mouths of his gentlefolk; and if he ventures to represent the evil life which he saw around him, he never fails at the same time to raise the voice of indignation and of pity. Thus, in that same play of "*Fiorina*," after the carrying away of the girl, he makes the old woman, Teodosia, say—

"One sees nowadays curious things; people live such bad lives that in a little while there will be no safety even in our own homes. Think what a pleasant surprise is in store for that poor father and mother! I feel as if I could cry for pity and rage!"

Beolco's letters also, though seemingly gay, are inexpressibly sad when read between the lines. He seems to feel so keenly the desolation and brutality of the age. These letters, written in the old Paduan dialect, are masterpieces in their way, and might really have been written by a simple-minded peasant, who said all that he felt. They are not the letters of an actor who comes to pay his court to the great cardinal, but those of a courageous and generous man who loves his country and tells the truth.

"Our grandmother Rome," he writes, "has not given you that hat, my good Lord Cardinal, to preserve you from the sun or from freckles, but in order that you may shelter us; and she has given you that purple mantle that you may keep us all beneath it against your heart, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings. Give us back our confidence and peace of mind. Look what the country is becoming! The voices of youths and maidens are no longer heard singing along the roadsides and in the fields. Even the birds do not sing any more, and I believe that we are stifled by the plague. The very nightingales have not such beautiful voices as in the former days. Peace has left us, and no more feasts are celebrated. The country is in such misery that one can say, 'Happy are

the dead who no longer feel war, ruin, and the plague.' We are even worse than the fathers who killed their children, for nowadays the times are so corrupt that husband and wife each go their own way to try to live. Love has disappeared. Try to find such a thing as a lover! No one wishes to marry, for a wife must be fed; and how is that to be done when there is nothing in the house? Instead of lovers' sighs, one hears only cries of hunger. Every one is afraid. Charity goes knocking from door to door, but finds no one who will open and give her shelter. One does not even dare to weep, when following the coffin of a friend, for fear of spoiling too many handkerchiefs."

Then resuming his joking tone, Ruzzante ends thus—

"Be our friend. I wish to be yours. You can ask me as many times as you like to dine with you. I will never refuse you anything, even to giving you good counsels."

Even in the midst of his liveliest buffooneries, Beolco will break suddenly into a burst of real passion; give a turn of tragedy to his situations, or utter a profound thought or a cry of pity and indignation. The serious side of his mind reveals itself often in the most touching words, but, unfortunately, they cannot be translated from the dialect without losing the essence and delicate bloom of the original character. He himself said, that had he made his personages speak in Tuscan, they would have been merely conventional types and not realities, and he was right.

Next in order to his letters, in the printed book of his works, are some pieces called dialogues. He gives in them a very faithful picture of the times in which he lived. In one of them, Bilora, a peasant, has had his wife stolen from him by a rich man named Andronico, and goes in search of her.

Bilora. Who would have thought that love would drive me to leave my own house and wander about among

people whom I do not know? I can't imagine what has come over me. They say that love can do nothing. But I see very plainly that he can do what he likes. It must be love that forced me to come and look where my wife is hidden. Otherwise I should never have walked all yesterday, all last night, and all this morning across woods and fields, along highways and ravines. Love drags a man along more forcibly than three pairs of oxen. I am so tired that I can hardly stand. There are those who say that love stays only with the young, and drives them wild. But I perceive very well that he haunts the steps of old men also, for if he had not pierced and taken away the heart of that old jaberber (may the cancer eat him!) he would never have stolen my wife. Could not the old usurer be contented with his ducats without wanting my wife? I will do my best to get her out of his town. But who knows if I shall be able to see her? . . . I am dying of hunger, and have no money to buy any bread. If only I knew where my Dina lived, I would beg her to give me a bit of bread to eat."

He is going away when he meets an old acquaintance named Pittaro.

Pittaro. Eh! Is that you, Bilora? And what are you doing here?

Bil. I have come for that affair with Messer Andro— How do you pronounce his name? Androtene or Ardorchene? That old foreign gentleman who has carried off my wife?

Pit. You are very foolish to come. When all is over, what can you expect to gain from your wife, who appears to have forgotten all about you? It would be far better not to try to persuade her to return to you, for she is amusing herself vastly: no cares, no fatigues; as much to eat and drink as she likes, and well served—for there is a dog of a valet to wait upon both of them.

He then proceeds to explain that old Messer Andronicus is madly enamoured of Bilora's wife, and that she appears to be attached to him. It is always "dear Messere" here and "sweet Messere" there.

He then again advises Bilora to go away—that he will gain nothing

by remaining ; but Bilora is not at all of the same opinion.

"I might, after all, persuade her to return with me," he says, "and it would be better if she should come peaceably than make a scene ; for if I met the old man I should certainly beat him. I must see my Dina. Is she alone in the house ?"

Pittaro still repeats that he had better go away, and not be caught prowling round there, and leaves him.

Left alone, Bilora sends Pittaro to the devil, and is so tormented with love, anxiety, and rage, that he determines to knock at all the houses and ask news of his wife. At the very first house Dina appears at the window.

Dina. Who is knocking ? Who is there ? Oh ! is it you, poor man ? Go away in peace.

Bil. Yes, I am very poor ; but that is no reason for going away. I am your friend. Come down, Dina. It is I.

Dina. Who are you ? What friend ? The gentleman is not in the house. Get along with you !

Bil. Ah, Dina ! Come down here a little while. It is I. Don't you know me, you idiot ?

Dina. I tell you to get away from here ; I tell you I don't know you. The gentleman is absent ; he has gone out on business, and I have no time to chatter.

Bil. Ah ! how you must have changed, dear Dina ! Come down here ; I wish to speak frankly to you. It is really I, Dina. Do you not see that I am Bilora, your husband.

Dina. Oh gracious ! is it you ? And what are you doing here ? Tell me.

Bil. What do you say ? I can't hear you. Come down here that I may look at you.

Dina. I'll come.

Bil. Come with me, sister of my faith, and I'll take you back again as you were before.

Dina. Good evening. Here I am, since you wish to see me so much. How are you ? Pretty well ?

Bil. Very well. And you ? How well you look !

Dina. By the aid of heaven ! To tell you the truth, I am not very well. I am bored to death by that old man.

Bil. Youth and old age never go well together. You and I agree much better.

Dina. To begin with, he is ailing, and coughs all night, so that I cannot sleep.

Bil. Well, then, tell me, Dina, will you come back with me to your old house, or are you going to remain here for ever with this dotard ? Tell me.

Dina. I wish to go home, but *he* will not hear of it. And he does not wish that you should come here. If you only knew how kind he is to me ! By the fever ! he is all attention, and I am very comfortable.

Bil. It makes no difference what *he* wishes, so long as you wish to go home with me. But I see through your tricks. You don't wish to come back to me, and are telling me lies, eh ?

Dina. What should I say to you ? I wish it, and don't wish it (*vorraè e si no vorraè*).

Bil. She thinks she is deceiving me. Will the old imbecile be out long ?

Dina. He ought to return immediately ; but I would not like him to find me talking with any one. Go away for now, brother, and return secretly, and we will arrange something.

Bil. Yes, by blows. Take care, Dina ! If once I am roused I shall be worse than a drunken soldier.

After more threats from Bilora, Dina suggests that she shall tell her lover when he returns that her husband has come for her, and that, whether he likes it or not, she intends to leave him and go back to her home. She then gives Bilora some money to buy something to eat, and goes into the house again.

Bilora finds Pittaro, and begs him to go to Andronico and try to arrange matters. "Tell him," he says, "that he must let Dina go since she wishes it ; and that if he refuses I will kill him ; that I am a soldier and a bravo,—that will frighten him."

Pittaro, however, with the best intentions in the world, does not effect much in his interview with the old man; for Dina, when appealed to, refuses to go; denies that she has ever seen her husband, or promised to go with him. Pittaro, therefore, retires discomfited, and reports his conversation to Bilora, who is furious, and upbraids his friend for not having been more determined. Pittaro again advises him to leave Dina alone; but finding him obstinate, he bids him good-bye, and leaves him.

Bilora (alone). No, I won't go away. To hear Pittaro talk, would one not think that he had done me the greatest service? By the fever! my affairs are all going heels in the air and head downwards. It is enough to make the chickens laugh! What am I to do now? I can't get my wife back. This old man has ruined my life. I wish he were dead and under the ground. If I could see him, I'd help him to go there. If I gave him a drubbing he'd scream. Better do as the Spanish soldiers do, and then he won't have the time to say eighteen words. Let me look at my dagger (*takes it from his sheath*). By the cancer! he need not be much afraid of that; it is as innocent of harm as my shoe. I'll beat him, the old curmudgeon; I'll beat him within an inch of his life. I'll take his clothes and sell them, and buy a horse with the money to carry me far away from here; for I cannot remain here after murdering him. I shall have to become a soldier, and live in the fields, for I shall not be able to bear the sight of my house again.

At this moment Andronico comes out of his house.

Andronico (on the steps talking to his servant). Who is that animal always prowling about this house? Some drunkard? You need not come with me; remain at home and keep Dina company. I am only going for a little walk, and you can come and meet me later with the lantern. I shall go round by the ferry.

Bil. (enraged at the sound of Dina's name fingers his club). Yes, you old

villain, I'll "animal" you. (*Strikes him.*)

And. Oh, my sweet son! Mercy! mercy! Help! help! Fire! treason! murder. Fire! fire! (*He falls.*)

Bil. Fire! You'll go to purgatory! Give me back my wife now! I told you to let her go. . . . I believe he is really dead. His feet and hands are quite cold and still. I did not mean really to kill him. I warned him not to push matters too far.

Here the piece ends. It is impossible to do justice in a translation to the energy and local colouring of the original. It is a tragedy such as may have taken place any night on a Venetian ferry (*traghetto*) where, in the olden times, the steps were so often bathed with blood, and from which all traces of crime were washed away before morning by the lapping waters of the lagoon.

The soliloquy of Bilora is magnificent in its truthful colouring, and for the swift changes of feeling represented in it. He is an assassin who premeditates murder, and yet who shrinks from it. He wishes to insult his enemy, to fight with him, and if the man dies, so much the worse. It is easy to see how *much* could have been made of this character, this mixture of laughter, of tears, and of terror, by an impassioned actor like Beolco himself.

Beolco's comedies of the "Fiorina," the "Vaccaria," and the "Piovana," all turn on the carrying off of the fair object of the lover's choice, by the lover himself (*Ruzzante*), aided by his familiar (*Menato*), who throws dust in the eyes of the girl's natural protectors, all the time assisting his friend to overcome all difficulties in his way. The character of Nina in the "Piovana" is one of the sweetest and purest in the dramatic literature of the sixteenth century. In the "Moschetta" there is a funny scene between *Ruzzante* and *Tonin*, the "man-at-arms" from Bergamo.

Ruzzante becomes jealous of the attentions paid to his wife Bettia by Tonin, who, after the fashion of the Spanish captains, imagines himself a great lady-killer, and boasts of the favours which he has received at the hands of the prettiest ladies of the town in which he finds himself.

Ruzzante (alone). I am so angry, I cannot contain myself. I shall be obliged to insult him. I shall have to go and chastise that soldier for paying such attentions to Bettia, and for saying that he has lent me and my comrade money, when he owes us money, and he won't pay. May the cancer eat his heart! Cowardly dog! . . . What shall I do? How shall I act? Shall I thrash him in the usual way, or shall I frighten him by a challenge? If I beat him he might hide away, and will then some day strike me in the back like a Spaniard. If I challenge him he might shoot me with his cross-bow. I think I'll challenge him. For I will be brave though he be a coward."

Enter Tonin. Ruzzante complains about his attentions to Bettia, and his debts.

Ruzzante. If you don't pay I'll complain to the Podestà, and then we'll see who will look the finest.

Tonin. Take care what you say! I am a man-at-arms from Bergamo, and when I am fully equipped, I have been known to frighten people into fits by my very face. Take care of yourself, I say, and don't provoke me!

Ruz. Afraid of you! I should not be afraid of ten such stuffed dolls as you. I tell you that if you do not pay me and get out of this house, I'll fight you.

Ton. If you were a man-at-arms, on a horse, like me, and you came and demanded a combat, I might be persuaded to listen to you.

Ruz. By the cancer! I am a better soldier than you are. You are a stuffed soldier, always boasting, and doing nothing but ruining other people.

Ton. By my faith, with three blows, I could chop you into pig's meat!

Ruz. You call me a pig! Pig yourself! I'll remember that! Look out for yourself!

Ton. Look out for yourself, pig.

Ruz. Remember that you have called me a pig!

Ton. That won't be difficult. I should think that you could remember it yourself. But I'll remember it for you, with pleasure.

Ruz. You shall hear from me again. I will have satisfaction, for he called me a pig! (*Exit Tonin.*)

Ruz (alone). Matters look serious. It seems as though he meant to fight, after all. I did not expect that.

(*Gets out his weapons.*)

Menato, his familiar, enters.

Menato. Comrade, what news? What are you doing with those arms?

Ruz. I am sharpening them for others than you.

Men. But for whom?

Ruz. For that Bergamasque soldier, your friend; and you had better have the Mass of St Gregory said for him.

Men. Why? Is he dead?

Ruz. Not yet; but he wishes to kill me, and I am going to fight with him, so you may reckon him as good as dead.

Men. But suppose that he should kill you, what would you gain?

Ruz. (*laying down his arms*). That is true. Perhaps he might.

Men. Is it not better to be a coward and live, than a gallant man and die?

Ruz. If he killed me, then he would perhaps marry Bettia, and I should not get my money either. Perhaps it would be more Christian to spare his life: what do you say, comrade?

Men. I say that I will arrange the matter with Tonin.

Ruz. But frighten him well! Yes, it would be more magnanimous to spare his life. (*They go out.*)

Menato finds Tonin, who is quaking with fear at the prospect of the duel, and who receives him with joy. He tries to induce Menato to pacify Ruzzante. Menato, upon discovering that Tonin is also frightened nearly out of his wits, repre-

sents Ruzzante as wild to fight, and relates such tales of his prowess on former occasions that the quaking Tonin is only too thankful to come to terms, and makes abject apologies, which Ruzzante magnanimously accepts, and they walk off, well content to breakfast together. Thus the play ends.

The "Vaccaria" and the "Piovana" have shorter scenes, and probably were helped out by "Lazzi," or improvised fooleries, tumblings, and interruptions of Arlecchino, which were not unusual when the plot was meagre, and helped to pad the play. These "Lazzi" were endless in the hands of skilful actors. According to the ancient Italian custom, Beolco improvised his comedies. They were mere sketches; and some of the scenes are only indicated thus: "The bravo enters and is impudent to Ruzzante;" or, "Here they sing; and when they have finished, Nale must suddenly appear, and, pointing his sword at Menego, say, 'Defend yourself, traitor!' but Menego, frightened, does not defend himself, but runs hither and thither, and receives many blows," &c. The rest of the action and speech is left entirely to the imagination and quick wit of the actor.

The fifth comedy, the "Anconitana," is longer, and marks a great advance upon the others both in shape and plot. The argument is this: Tancred and Theodore, two Sicilian youths, and Isotta, a woman from Gaeta, are all three taken by pirates while on their way to Sicily, and sold to the Algerines. Isotta, for safety during her travels, has dressed herself in men's clothes, and calls herself Gismondo. They are ransomed for Christianity's sake by a Venetian merchant, and taken to Venice, on condition that they shall not leave the city until the money spent on their ransom shall have been repaid. After the Italian

fashion (where everything, from the mending of a carriage-wheel to the making of shoes, is done in the street), the three young men address themselves from the square of St Mark's to a certain Doralice whom they see sitting at a window, and tell her that they desire to enter the service of some lady in order to earn the money for their ransom. They then enumerate to her their various accomplishments:—

Tancred. I have devoted myself to the delights of verse in the vulgar tongue. I can describe the charms of a lady, and her beautiful eyes; I can sing the praises of her fair hair, of her white neck, and her delicate hands. I can write letters, eclogues, songs, sonnets, madrigals, odes; and such things are not to be despised. They are held dear in the world (*d'al mondo tutto seria tenuta cara*).

Doralice. Truly a most excellent accomplishment. . . . By this means one can remain beautiful even after death. . . . Look at Madonna Laura, so much praised by Petrarch. Even to this day (*al di d'hozzi*) there are to be found many who are still inflamed by her beauty, and sigh that they did not live in her time. . . .

Theodore then says that he knows how to prepare chemical waters by which the complexion can be made white and rose, the hair a lovely golden, and the eyebrows dark as night.

Dor. Oh, a gallant accomplishment, by my faith! But the reason that ladies make themselves beautiful after that fashion is that they are married, and wish to retain their husband's love. . . .

Gismondo can spin and dye cloth such marvellously lovely tints that they sell for Eastern fabrics. While they are discussing their skill with Doralice, a lady passes through the square (the wife of a very rich old citizen and senator, Ser Tommaso), and, thinking Gismondo a man, falls violently in love with him, and persuades her husband to take

him into their service. Ser Tommaso, the better to carry on an intrigue with Doralice, willingly accedes to his wife's wishes; and by the help of his familiar (Ruzzante, who is in love with Doralice's servant), the matter is arranged, and Gismondo is provided for in the house of the great lady.

Ruzzante then meets in the street two people (apparently men), who accost him.

Ginevra (dressed as a man). Have you seen, my good brother, three young men, who were taken by corsairs and wish to find some one who will ransom them? One has entered the house of a wealthy lady, and is younger than the others.

Ruzzante. Taken by the Turks? Yes, I saw one only a while ago. He knows how to sew and cut well.

Gen. One is my brother, and I am come to ransom him.

Ruz. Tell me which one is your brother, and perhaps I can put you in the way of finding him.

Ruzzante (the fool) pretends to be very stupid, and becomes mysterious, saying that he knows more than he can tell. At last the young man says to him:—

Clown, I will tell you my secret, and I will pay you well if you will help me to find this young man. I am a woman from Ancona, a widow, rich, and in love.

Ruzzante. You a woman! My mind misgave me when I saw you. I thought that you were not a man when I saw your shoulders.

Then Ginevra, the Ancona widow, explains that she has fallen in love with this young man, Gismondo, whom she saw once in the street at Ancona, when the Venetian was bringing them to Venice. That the ship had sailed before she could collect sufficient money to ransom him, and that she had followed him to Venice as quickly as she could. Ruzzante promises that she shall have an interview with Gismondo. He then finds Gismondo, and sends

him to the inn to the widow. Gismondo is much astonished, and asks her if the clown has not made a mistake, and what she can possibly want with him?

Ginevra. Know, graceful youth, that above all things I love you; that I have dressed myself as a man and followed you. I was born in Gaeta, but married a man from Ancona, who died after a year, leaving me all his fortune. . . .

Gismondo. Alas!

Gen. Why do you sigh like that? Is my love obnoxious to you?

Gen. No, madonna mia; I was thinking of something else—the recollections that came to me at the name of Gaeta. Would you object to telling me who your parents were?

Gen. Messer Gabriotti was my father, a most honest man, and Madonna Dionora di Neri was my mother.

It is then discovered that Gismondo is the much mourned Isotta, the lost twin-sister of Madonna Ginevra; and the play ends by Ginevra ransoming all three, the two Sicilian youths and Isotta. Isotta marries Tancred, while the widow consoles herself with Theodore, and all sail for Sicily.

The family likeness of the plot of the "Anconitana" to that of "Twelfth Night" is obvious; and it is not impossible that Shakespeare, having drawn more than one of his plays from Italian sources, may have utilised this one among others. Molière, we know, profited greatly by the dialect comedies of the seventeenth century, turning them with a humour and covering them with a grace which would have astonished their original authors, and perhaps have induced them to keep silence as to their own share in the composition. In the comedy of "Doctor Bachetone," written more than a hundred years before Molière's time, may be found the character, actions, and principal speeches of Tartuffe. The sub-

jects of "L'Ecole des Maris" and "Georges Dandin" were taken from Boccaccio, and from the comedy of the "Sporta" of Galli; while the "Etourdi" is an imitation of the "*Inavvertito*" of Niccolò Barbieri, called Beltrame, written in 1629. But, as Molière laughingly said, when he was loudly accused of plagiarism, "Je prends mon bien où je le trouve." May not Shakespeare have acted in like manner towards Beolco? The sixth and last play, which is printed among Ruzzante's works, is the "Rhodiana," which is supposed to have been published among Beolco's plays by mistake. It has usually been supposed that he pirated it from Andrea Calmo, but the truth of the matter appears to have been stated at the end of the prologue to the play, and gives us every reason to believe that the comedy was written out by Ruzzante from memory, after having seen the play acted from the original sketch by Andrea Calmo, and improvised as usual. The sentence in the prologue stands thus:—

"It being the custom at Carnival time to please you with plays of this kind, we should not have been able to do so this year without the help of one of our comrades, who has not left his own company however, but who has brought us this comedy, which you will see represented this evening. We therefore owe this play to the *good and retentive memory* of him who has brought it to us, and we are sure that it will please you, if you will deign not to make too much noise."

It is a curious fact in the history of those nations who have pretended to a national theatre, that the golden age of the drama has appeared after the nation has passed victoriously through some dangerous crisis of its existence, where great difficulties have been overcome by great and courageous efforts; after it has

triumphantly passed through a life and death struggle, where the combat has given it a consciousness not only of its own strength and greatness, but also of its very existence. In short, national feeling, which is the breath of great literary development, is always the result of a great crisis—the consequence of a period of heroic struggles against the influences naturally opposed to genius. The Greek drama flourished after Salamis. Shakespeare and the golden age of the English drama arose after the destruction of the Armada. It was after the battle of Lepanto, in which the Spanish aid had gained the day, that Lope de Vega and Moreto raised the Spanish drama to its highest glory and filled the Peninsula with their imperishable masterpieces, before retiring to end their days in the sanctity of the cloister. The entire Peninsula had been united under one hand; Portugal and Aragon, Leon and Castile, Valencia and Murcia, occupied their places in the Spanish kingdom; the last trace of Moorish domination had been effaced, and the last movement of provincial independence had been stifled at Saragossa.

But in Italy the theatre could not become a *national* one, because the principal element requisite, a common national life, was entirely wanting. The peoples, as well as the States of Italy, had nothing in common—neither customs, institutions, interests, nor ideas. The very language was not a national one. To a Neapolitan, the Italian of the north was a man who spoke French, and the populace of Venice would have found it impossible to understand the Florentine jokes of a Cecchi or a Firenzuola. In order to be national, the language in which the comedy is written, its jokes, its allusions, the customs and prejudices which are held up to derision, should certainly be those

which every one can understand, no matter in what part of the land they be represented. Italy, not being a united nation at that time, and not speaking one language, it followed that each province retained its own particular dialect, although Florence tried to impose a national language upon her neighbours, regardless of their municipal and provincial rights.

Thus, in spite of the wit which distinguished the comedies of Machiavelli, and in spite of the art with which Ariosto paraphrased the Latin comedies upon the Italian stage; in spite of the inimitably lively and spirited dialogues of Cecchi, and the satiric salt of Aretino,—the written comedy remained artificial and learned, or *erudita*, as the Italians themselves called it. It was not a production of the national life, and it never penetrated to the people. It remained an exotic, cultivated with care, with infinite art, and at great expense, in the hothouses of learned literature. It was well qualified to excite a smile in the exquisites, who assembled in the Rucellai gardens, and to amuse the Papal Court at the Vatican: but it left the people cold and dumb; for they, being ignorant of Latin and Greek literature, could neither understand nor admire its beauties.

Thus, as in the eighteenth century there were two kinds of opera, the "opera seria" and "opera buffa," so in the sixteenth century the public divided its attention between two kinds of comedy,—the "Commedia Erudita," or *sostenuta*, which consisted of imitations from the ancient Greek plays, and was enjoyed and supported by princes and courtiers, by the learned and the rich, in the courtyards of palaces or in the apartments of private houses; and the 'Commedia dell' Arte,' or mask comedy, which had originated from the old Mimes

and Atellanæ, and which was encouraged and run after by the common people (who wished to be amused and not instructed), and was performed in the public squares and market-places.

The national literature and the dialect literature were therefore always at variance—an arena with two sets of combatants—the aristocracy and *litterati* on the one side, the mass of the people on the other. As one flourished the other declined, until, after the breaking up of the commonwealths in the sixteenth century, the dialect literature, becoming richer and fuller, triumphed over its adversary; every province, and nearly every city, having poems and plays in its own peculiar dialect, bringing to light all that was poetical, imaginative, and original in the small provinces of the Peninsula.

Each province created a special caricature of the peculiar characteristic of its people; and a variety of characters being got together upon a movable stage, the 'Commedia dell' Arte' was thoroughly established, taking the name of Arte probably from the fact of the original actors having belonged to the trades or guilds, and having adopted acting as a regular profession.

At first the performances of the 'Commedia dell' Arte' were only farces jumbled together (without skill or unity) in the dialect of the lower classes, accompanied by vivacious gestures, and representing scenes from Italian life, with the sole aim of making the spectators laugh,—in short, they were a series of local buffooneries, holding up to view the customs of the most humble of the populace. But gradually they assumed a more regular form, with more dramatic unity, a more refined language, and, keeping the same characters as the Atellanæ, from which it sprang, and the same unvarying masks, became the 'Com-

media dell' Arte.' Thus the ancient Maccus, Bucco, and Pappus, were the ancestors of the modern Pulcinella, Arlecchino, and other masks of the sixteenth century; while the shaven head, the face mask, and the peculiar hat worn by some of the harlequins and masks of our own day, are peculiarities handed down from those ancient Mimes.

The principal characters are distributed something like this. The lovers come from Romagna, and they only speak Italian; Pantalone is still the honest Venetian merchant, simple and credulous, but now he has almost always two young and pretty daughters with him, and is duped more or less by the lovers of these girls, who bribe the servants to watch over their interests. Always, from time immemorial, careful and prudent in money matters, he becomes avaricious and niggardly (with the change for the worse in the affairs of the Republic), drinking wine which has been diluted at the fountain round the corner, and keeping the yolk of an egg for himself, while he magnanimously presents his family with the white, assuring them that such food prevents indigestion. The doctor is a man of learning and a man of law, and comes from Bologna, the "learned." Our doctor is called Graziano. He is necessarily pedantic, although he knows but little (and that little incorrectly); but he prides himself on knowing much and being thorough. His ignorance makes his pedantic ways very amusing. He quotes on every occasion, maiming the original text,—makes the Graces cut the thread of destiny, while the Fates assist at the toilet of Venus,—and so forth. As a lawyer, Doctor Graziano sees clearly only those cases which are *not* intrusted to him; and his pleadings are involuntarily short, for the simple reason that no one will listen to him.

These two characters are always received with immense applause, even to this day, and create great amusement. As to Arlecchino and Brighella, their peculiar differences and distinct buffooneries may perhaps be explained better by the still existing traditional anecdotes of them in Bergamo than by any analysis.

A farmer of Bergamo ordered Girolamo, his valet (Arlecchino), to buy seven donkeys at the fair. Girolamo goes on foot to the neighbouring village and buys the donkeys, pays for them, and returns to the farm mounted, in ecstasy, on one of the animals, and driving the remaining six before him. When he reaches home, before dismounting, he takes the precaution of counting his donkeys, and finds only six. Thinking that one has gone astray on the road, he rides back to the village, inquiring of every one he meets, if they have seen his lost donkey. But no one has seen him; and he rides about until nightfall, when the fatigued and famished animal which carries him utterly refuses to budge. This resistance draws Girolamo from his reverie, and striking his forehead, he exclaims, "Imbecile that I am! there is the donkey which I seek! I have been riding him all this time." This is the type of Arlecchino, an absent-minded fool.

Pantalone sends his other valet, Brighella, to one of his friends with a flask of choice wine; but knowing the tricks of the youth, and his fondness for eating and drinking (especially drinking), he takes the precaution of sealing the cork of the flask. Brighella makes a hole in the bottom, drinks half the contents, and then stops it up again. The friend to whom the wine is sent opens the flask, and perceives the theft. "Ah, you rascal!" he cries, "it is you who have made this hole and drunk half my wine."

Brighella pretends to be very much astonished and hurt at being suspected.

"You cannot surely mean what you say," he returns, in an injured tone, "because it is not from the bottom but from the top that the wine is missing." This is the other Bergamesque type — deceiving, sharp, and *rusé*.

From this time the erudite theatre declined, and that of the dialects redoubled its efforts to supplant even the Italian tragedy. Calmo anticipated this tendency in his Venetian eclogues; Pasqualigo introduced the Spanish Captain and Doctor Graziano into his pastoral fable of the "Intricati." These productions were evidently inspired by the 'Commedia dell' Arte,' and the masks came in by way of antithesis, diversion, and contrast.

All the saints, heroes, fairies, magicians, devils, and wonders of the plays of Lope then began to bloom upon the stage of the masks. The "Ghostly Ghost of Peter," the "Conversion of St Margaret of Cortona," the "Struggles of St Cyprian with the Devil," and the "Enterprises of the King of Leon, Castile, and Aragon," made the rounds of all the theatres of Italy, dragging with them Pulcinella, Pantalone, and the rest of the motley brotherhood, constituting a strange chaos of heroic sublimities and plebeian buffooneries. The scene between Arlecchino (Leporello) and the statue in Don Giovanni is a remnant which has been handed down to our own times. This was the golden period of the Venetian theatre. Good writers did not disdain to write plays for the mask stage; and although they were far from being first-rate, these plays and fragments of plays show literary talent far greater than we could require from a modern actor; for it must be remembered that the

authors of the 'Commedia dell' Arte' were also frequently actors and dancers.

In 1680, the French influence supplanted that of the Spanish. There were skeleton plots taken from Molière (a curious return of compliments and exchange of piracy), from Corneille and Racine, with improvised dialogues, retaining the characters of the dialect comedy. But the French dramas were too classic, too correct, to bear the *laissez aller* of improvisation. Buffoonery was therefore excluded; the costumes themselves were changed; the actors failed to interest the public; their jokes were old, and no one knew how to improvise new ones. But as they had to live, the actors learned long pieces by heart, and prepared scenes beforehand (which took away all the freshness of the action), and were interrupted by the Lazzi or tomfooleries of Arlecchino, in order to give them time to begin the dialogue with fresh vigour.

Although the four principal characters still retained their fascinations for the people, the minor ones ceased to please, and gave place to other and newer personages. Thus the Spanish Captain adopted the dress of a Bolognese citizen and became Scaramuccia, retaining, however, all the pride of 1670. Tartaglia took the place of the Lombard Meneghino, and gasped out phrases in stutterings and stammering; while the educated actors watched with unquiet souls the increasing weakness of the expiring comedy, and felt a desire to imitate the French stage. They wished to found a national theatre—but whence obtain the plots?

Cotta took them without ceremony from France; he translated Corneille and Racine, and tried to reform the Italian theatre by introducing French plays. When this

French phase appeared on the Italian stage, Riccoboni, influenced by the classical tendencies around him, searched among the old Italian comedies, and chose the "Scholastica" of Ariosto, altered it to meet what he supposed to be the prevailing taste, and put it on the stage. The representation was never finished. An immense crowd had run to the theatre, lured by the name of Ariosto, in the expectation of seeing the loves of Angelica and Medoro, the furies of Orlando, the enchantments of Alcina, acted by their beloved Pantalone, Arlecchino, and Brighella, with all the paraphernalia of incantations, of combats, and of metamorphoses. Imagine their disgust when they saw the actors (who were dreaming of the age of Leo X. and its classical comedies) go through a play which was like so much Greek to the spectators. They made such an uproar that the curtain was lowered and the play discontinued, and Riccoboni retired to France, cursing the ignorance and perverted tastes of his fellow-citizens.

With the eighteenth century begins the decrepitude of the 'Commedia dell' Arte,' which had shown so promising a youth in the days of Beolco. It was attacked by Goldoni, and vainly defended by Gozzi; and after 1770 the 'Commedia dell' Arte' was entirely banished from the sight of the higher classes. Italy, as Voltaire expressed it, was delivered from the Harlequins; and the poor routed masks were forced to seek a refuge among the sheds and booths of fairs. But it proved impossible to destroy and stamp out from the hearts of the people the chief characters of the dialect comedy. Even in our own day, changed as they are, modernised into the Florentine Stenterello, the Milanese Meneghino, and the Piedmontese Gianduiua, and the

Roman Rogantino, they still retain their old characteristics. They have defied the inconstancy of the public, the caprices of authors, and the tyranny of fashion; they have seen the Venetian aristocracy fade away by whom they were despised; they have survived the Republic, and outlived the Council of Ten; and the three special masks of Venice, Arlecchino, Pantalone, and Brighella, have buried the three inquisitors of State. Their absolutely popular character has saved them in the midst of revolutions and catastrophes.

If, as is the case, they still please the mass of the nation—if, after having so long amused the fathers, they still make the children laugh—we can only envy the Italian lower classes their faithfulness to their old pleasures, and admit that, despite political and social changes, the character of the Italian people has altered but little since the days when it delighted in the wit, the pathos, the grimaces and *caprioles* of Angelo Beolco, surnamed Il Ruzzante.

The crowd of laughing villagers have retired to their poor homes in the Mosciano village, nestling in the cleft of the mountain. For many a day they will laugh over the absurd jokes of Arlecchino, the stinginess of Pantalone, and the underhand trickeries of Brighella. The stars were shining brightly as we descended into the valley and made our way homewards; the fire-flies were flitting through the corn-fields and along the hedgerows ("those burning words of love which cannot die," as the Italian legend calls them); the moon was streaming over hill and dale; the cool dews bathed the earth's weary and heated face,—while we mused over this remnant of one of the oldest "*Roba d'Italia*."

THE CRUISE OF THE COYA.

WE wonder how many men with the means and opportunities of taking their annual holidays abroad, can yet say that the beauty of their own country has prevented them ever leaving it at holiday time! For ourselves, there are certain quiet spots in England which, having once charmed us, hold us yet as the Ancient Mariner held the Wedding Guest. Next year, perhaps, we may break the spell, but there have been many "next years" during which the spell has grown stronger. Then the places we like we have a burning desire to show to our friends; and so it was that the skipper persuaded the mate to accompany him in a cruise on those waters whereof we wrote in 'Maga' for December 1879,—“The Broads and Rivers of Norfolk and Suffolk.”

The preparations for such an expedition, where you are to be your own housekeepers, cooks, servants, and general storekeepers, and where your amusements include fishing, shooting, and photography, are multitudinous.

The skipper had made an especial point of being well found in liquids; but when the wine merchant's man placed a large array of bottles of stout and beer in the stern-sheets, and left them to the mercy of the hot sun while the skipper was cleaning out some lockers, it was rather hard lines for the latter to have to make tracks for the fore-peak, to escape the fusillade of corks and fountains of foam and good liquor which attacked him in the rear. The mate looked dubiously at the pile of luggage on the cab, the tiny yacht which rode at her moorings on the placid lake, and the minute dingy which pro-

fessed its readiness to take us on board; but notwithstanding the doubts he looked and expressed, the chaos produced by unpacking rapidly became order as cunningly devised lockers received their contents. At last the only thing which had not a satisfactory location was the box containing the photographic apparatus, which was a perpetual shin-barker during the voyage.

The Coya is a four-ton yacht, especially adapted for single-handed sailing. She is 20 feet over all, by 7 feet 9 inches beam, with a large centre-board. She draws only two feet of water with the board up. Her cabin has three feet eight inches head-room. It does not admit of a standing position; when you want to stand, which at certain stages of dressing is advisable, you must go into the stern-sheets or well, where, when at anchor, a tent is made by means of an awning thrown over the boom. The mate called the cabin a respectable dog-kennel; but by the time experience had taught him where the knocks came in when you incautiously moved about, he had come to regard it as a spacious apartment. It certainly was uncommonly cosy, especially at night, with the lamp lit and the curtains drawn over the windows. The yacht was rigged with one large sail, *Una* fashion, and was the handiest boat possible. She was also fast, particularly in a breeze, and was just the thing for knocking about these inland waters.

She was then lying on Oulton Broad, with the water like a mirror around her; not a breath of wind cooled the air; the low shores were indistinct in a quivering haze, and the great bowl of the blue sky was

so perfectly continued in the water beneath, that the double images of yachts and boats seemed magically suspended in a hollow globe of air. The absolute stillness was only broken at times by the splashing of a shoal of grey mullet; and in a dead calm the evening drew on, and the stars were as brightly mirrored in the lake as they shone in the sky. A light breeze sprang up as we were turning into our hammocks, and as neither of us was sleepy, we listened to and wondered at the indescribable and mysterious noises which proceed from ropes and spars on a breezy night. Rap, rap, rap—the halliards against the mast plainly; but creak, creak, rattle, rattle, and then a heavy footfall along the deck, and a patter, patter, like a dog running across! yet there is nobody there. There is no fear of any molestation, however, so we need not be nervous.

In the morning we were early astir. One does get up early in the beginning of a cruise, the fresh air is so bracing and invigorating. Besides, the early worm catches the fish. After a while, however, one has to exhort one's companion to get up by letting down his hammock. Fishing is voted slow, and early worms dirty. Then what is the good of getting up early when others get up earlier? There were guns banging away before dawn, and there were no ducks left for us, so we hunted milk and eggs instead. The skipper met with an indignity this morning. He had with much labour and abrasions and cuts constructed for himself a punt or dingey, of which he was very proud; and a man who was spearing for eels, while waiting for a flight of fowl, offered him 30s. for it as an *eel-trunk*.

All that day the skipper had to take an active part in the manage-

ment of a regatta on the Broad, and it was not until the next morning that the cruise actually began, and then we commenced a long beat against a light north-easterly breeze to Yarmouth. And now we became subject to the slavery of the photographic box. Whenever we saw a picturesque drainage windmill, a cottage in a group of trees, ancient ruins, yachts or wherries making a pretty picture, "Oh, we must have that!" and the yacht was run up to the bank. The mate would drag forth the big box and deposit it on the skipper's toes, and the skipper would trip up the mate with the tripod. Then the mate would do the focussing and exposing, while the skipper "shoo'd" off the too curious bullocks and cows, or dispensed valuable advice. We used the dry-plate process of course, and had the plates developed when we got home. We over-exposed most of them; for it seemed impossible that a second's exposure should suffice; and the skipper constantly urged, when not engaged with the cows, "Give it another second to make sure." Still we obtained a great number of excellent pictures, well worth all the tides and winds we lost through the constantly recurring delays.

We had a friendly contest with a wherry which did not like being passed, and hugged the shore so that we could not get to windward of her, and had to pass to leeward, always a difficult operation on account of their great sails shutting off the wind. Then we had a narrow escape of a smash. Haddiscoe swing-bridge has two openings, and we made for the windward one. Two wherries close upon our heels also made for the same; while there were some meeting wherries, going through the other opening. All at once it occurred to the skipper that he would lose the wind under the

lee of the bridge, and thereby lose headway, while the wherries with their lofty canvas and great weight would overrun the yacht and make matchwood of her. So in stentorian tones he requested them to make for the leeward opening, and they altered their course only just in time to avert the accident. The right bank of the river was a steep declivity covered with gorse, heather, and fir-trees, which the mate looked lovingly upon, for they reminded him of his own country.

At St Olave's bridge we had to lower the mast, which is a troublesome operation, and then we had a monotonous beat down the river with the tide going out at a rare pace, until we came to Burgh Castle. We landed here and raced up the wooded hill with our camera to take the magnificent walls and towers of this extensive Roman fabric; and so interested were we that we spent more time there than we ought to have done, for when at last we got into Breydon Water, we found the tide against us and the wind falling, so that we made but slow progress. It was a lovely evening, with an orange glow in the west which was reflected back from the tanned sails of the wherries as they came up from Yarmouth with the flood, and, brightest of all, from the yellower sails of a topsail barge from Kent. She came along in stately grandeur, with her lee-boards up as the wind was fair; but the lighter and faster wherries were rapidly overtaking her. Here and there was an eel-spearer in his punt striking regularly into the soft mud, anon lifting up his spear to shake off a writhing eel. There is a hut built on an old fishing-boat, wherein dwells an eel-fisher who is now mending his nets or threading lob-worms on to worsted for the purpose of making an eel-bab. Here is a smelt-fisher hauling in

his long brown net, while his wife is picking the glittering, cucumber-smelling smelts out of the meshes.

Over the great mud-flats, which at low water are visible on either side of the broad channel, the gulls, kittiwakes, and terns are wheeling; and in the intersecting streams and runlets, the herons stand with a regularity of distance apart we have often noticed. Here are seven in a straight line, with a space of ten yards between each. As we near them they straighten out their long necks, then lower them horizontally, then curve and twist them in a ludicrous hesitancy whether they shall take flight or not, perhaps flying away just when we have passed and the danger to them is over.

The wind had quite died away as we reached the lower end of Breydon, and the swift tide was bearing us backward. The water was too deep for us to "quant," our punt too light to enable us to tow, and there seemed nothing for it but to anchor, when a man rowed off from the quayside to our assistance. He knew how to cheat the tide by taking advantage of eddies and backwaters, and towed us through the bridges at the mouth of the Bure, the mast being lowered, and saw us safely moored at the quay. The day's sail was twenty miles.

We went on to the pier, but fled from its music-hall unpleasantness, and sought refuge in the Aquarium, where we were chiefly amused by the inability of a "tightly-tied-back" young lady to get down off a chair she had incautiously mounted, presumably with masculine assistance. Our cosy, brightly lighted cabin was, after all, the best, and thither we soon retired. The water of the river was phosphorescent, and as the tide swirled past the quay and the black bows of the vessels, it evolved shimmering lines of light and fire-fly sparkles.

Next morning we were up at five in order to save the two hours of flood which remained, and as there was no wind, the skipper took a long tow-line ashore and towed the yacht a couple of miles away from the town. As he was panting along, with his cap in his hand, his body at an angle of 45° , his feet in the mud, and the hollow in the front of his jersey showing that he was breakfastless, a bargee looked on him compassionately, and said, "And so ye calls that pleasure, master!" A swim, and bacon and coffee, put the skipper all right; but he begs to record his opinion that it is not wise to do any hard work *before* breakfast. (Nor, the mate adds, before or after any meal).

The wind was light and from the north-west—a head-wind in most of the reaches—and the beat against the tide was rather slow. The country was intensely flat, and lacking in the picturesqueness of the upper waters. It was late in the afternoon when Acle bridge, thirteen miles from Yarmouth, was reached; but that well past, the river was wider, its current slower, the scenery on the banks more luxuriant, the landscape softer and more beautiful, and, best of all, as we bent to the northward, the wind was fair. Creeping quietly along, with the boom well out, the Coya entered the mouth of the river Thurne, and while the mate sleepily steered, the skipper got out his pike-line and trailed an artificial bait behind. It was not long before he had a run; and as the yacht was brushing the reeds, he made a wild jump ashore, and after a frantic struggle with the coils of the main-sheet, whose obstructing presence he had ignored, he got right end up, and finally landed a nice pike. Then the mate must go ashore in like haste with the cam-

era; for just in front there was a farmhouse bowered in trees, a wind-mill, and a group of peasants exquisitely mirrored in the calm water.

A mile further we stopped for the night near an eel-set. These eel-boats are precisely like the Noah's arks of childhood, and are of ancient appearance; we have never seen a new one. The tanned nets, which are hung up to dry upon stakes around the dike in which the boat is moored, are carefully kept and well mended. Through the night the eel-fisher sits in his cabin, like some great spider in his web, waiting for the eels the stream will bring to his net. Long usage and prescription are the rights by which these eel-sets are maintained, and they are valuable properties. New ones are not likely to be established, for the anglers are jealous of the few pike and other fish which may—though but seldom, in our opinion—share the fate of the eels. The pleasure of the many is like to prove too much for the livelihood of the few; and we are sorry for it in this instance, for there is enough for all now the great drag-nets are abolished. Talking of drag-nets reminds us of a clever capture made by one watcher. He saw a party of men dragging the river one dark night, and watched them retire to their wherry, into the cabin of which they entered, shutting the doors to keep in the tell-tale light. Now these doors are fastened by a bar on the outside, and the watcher stealthily boarded the wherry and slipped the bar into its sockets, securely entrapping the men until he returned with assistance.

In the morning we passed Heigham bridges, and scanned the wide expanse of reed and water in search of the masts of a friend's yawl which we had appointed to meet hereabouts. There to the

left are two masts rising into the blue sky out of a forest of green, and after many devious turns, we enter Kendal Dike and round to opposite the Nymphœa, whereon are a parson and a captain. They are in sore straits, and we are only just in time to rescue them from the fate of drinking water, for they are reduced to the villanous and undrinkable compound sold as beer in Norfolk villages. We transferred ourselves and sundry bottles to their yacht, and made them happy. Figuratively speaking, they were knee-deep in fish caught that morning in Heigham Sounds. Great silver-sided roach and crimson-finned rudd lay in their jolly-boat; eels played hide-and-seek among the bottom-boards; worms wriggled on the seats; and grains, boiled rice, and wheat lay about in profusion. You cannot go fishing in Norfolk without these elements of a mess. Of course you must not lose your way amongst them. A large apron is an essential part of the angler's costume.

After lunch, we sailed up the deep clear dike, which presently opened out into the expanse of water and reed known as Heigham Sounds, then narrowed again between its reed-forests, to open out again into Whiteslea, then contracted once more, to finally merge in the glorious waters of Hickling. The Broad is 400 acres in extent, but seemed much larger; for its glittering waters were bounded by low and indistinct shores, looking in the summer haze more like thin banks of mist or cloud resting in the water than a boundary of land. A huge Y lay on the lake, written in massive posts which marked the channel—the latter branching into two, one leading to Catfield, and the other to Hickling Staithe. The general appearance of the country reminded us strongly of a descriptive passage in Henry

Havard's 'Picturesque Holland.' He says:—

"We sailed in the direction of the *Sneekermeer*, and after following for fully half an hour the various bends of a broad canal, we suddenly came into the middle of this great lake—an immense extent of water, the limits of which were scarcely visible.

"That which gives to the inland seas of Friesland an appearance almost unique, is the uniform flatness of the shores, also the nature of the soil which constitutes the bottom. This in fact, formed by inexhaustible peat-bogs, gives to the water a dark-violet colour, just like that of copying ink, the smallest ray of sun on the ripples producing a golden tint positively magical. Near land, this curious shade becomes more intense; in contrast with the tender green of the reed-beds, it becomes almost black.

"As soon, however, as you leave the shore, the land being so low, becomes almost imperceptible. One would imagine it a green cloak eternally floating on the face of the deep, dark waters, without fixity or solidity. The clumps of trees perceptible in the distance, the houses which lose themselves in the grey mist, the church steeples with their varnished tiles shining in the morning fog, seem to rise up on the water, and float on its surface. Even those extensive plains covered with reeds, always moving and bending to the softest breeze, only add to the fantastic appearance of the watery shores. Pliny's astonishment is easily understood when seeing for the first time these curious landscapes, and his comparing their inhabitants to eternal navigators—*navigantibus similes*."

The waters of these English meres, however, have not the peaty colour of the Friesland meres. The water is clear and pure, and where the bottom is gravelly, as it is all over Hickling and the Sounds and Horsey Mere, it is plainly visible. In the channel even we touch the bottom with a centre-board at times but when we haul it up we can sail anywhere over the Broad; and it is a singular sensation that of sliding quickly over green weed-beds and

golden spaces where the weeds have not taken root, and with only thirty inches of water. Before the introduction of centre-boards the yachts used on Hickling were beamy shallow boats, drawing only two feet of water, and lateen-rigged. Their remains lie pretty thickly on the banks, where they have been hauled up and abandoned. The long flat boats used by the marshmen and reed-cutters are not rowed, but are "set" along with a setting-pole after the fashion of Thames punting. They often startle you by shooting out of a dike when you fancy you are all alone with the fish and the wild-fowl. The wherry-men are as fond of bright colours as the Dutch; and the mast-heads of their wherries, and all parts not likely to come into contact with the cargoes, are gaily painted in fantastic patterns.

The crew of the yawl had returned to their fishing on the Sounds, and we ran the Coya in and dropped the anchor in three feet of water. When we were tired of catching roach, we got a live bait out for a pike, and caught a very large perch immediately. As a rule we did not fish much on our cruise, because we did not know what to do with the fish we caught. We couldn't eat bushels of rudd and scores of pike; so we contented ourselves with catching a few when we lay to in the evening.

This day, and indeed every day, we were astonished at the number of hawks which were always visible hovering over the marsh. Kestrels, marsh-harriers, and hen-harriers would be in sight together. Often they let us come quite close to them as they perched on the top of some reed stack or cock of the coarse marsh-hay,—a recent gorge probably being the cause of their disinclination to move. The skipper watched one hen-harrier from a hiding-place within ten yards,

noting how the sun glinted off his blue-grey back. Occasionally a crow or a pair of peewits would make a spirited attack upon one, and there would be many rapid wheels and turns and clatter of wings ere one or other of the combatants sheered off. Always, too, there were coots and water-hens making intersecting ripples across the water; herons standing in some lonely, reedy bay; reed-wrens lilt-ing some sweet fragment of a song; reed-buntings chattering busily; wagtails running over the broad undulating lily-leaves, and picking little black flies off the snowy petals of the flowers. If you pick a lily-leaf, by the way, you will often find it pierced by small holes, and on the under edge of these holes are the eggs of some insect, laid three parts round like a horse-shoe.

When the Coya was tired of fishing she spread out her great white wing and essayed to leave the Broad. But which way? The skipper had not taken his bearings as he came on, and the wind had shifted, so after a sail round by reeds of bewildering similarity of grouping, and passages which seemed but to end in reeds, he had to ask the captain and the parson—"Which *is* the way out?" and on their making mock of him he charged the thinnest belt of reeds, and by good hap emerged into the dike. Then we sailed back into the Thurne, with the yawl presently following, and sailed up with a wind which from now always seemed to be fair until we came to Martham Ferry. Here the river is made artificially narrow, and a huge raft, long enough to stretch from one bank to the other is kept in a recess on either side, and is drawn across when any one requires to use it. If the raft is on the other side of the river the wayfarer must wait until some one approaches on that side—and in that lonely neigh-

bourhood this may be a long time. Now men were busy carting hay, and they had left the ferry across, so the yachts had to lie to while two of the crew swung the great mass aside. Just beyond the ferry both yachts moored to the bank close together, and both crews passed the evening together, the parson telling witty stories, and the captain singing Vanderdecken, with a bull as an interested hearer. The animal had strayed past the yachts along the narrow strip of firm land, on the other side of which was an impassable bog. Now the lamps were lit he was afraid to come back again past the boats, and was an unwilling prisoner, charging anybody who went ashore unarmed with a mop or other implement of defence, but drawing back when he came to a ray of light. As he kept lowing threateningly, he was rather a nuisance as he stood mounting guard a few yards away. That night the skipper and the mate sat up late changing their photographic plates in the darkened cabin, lit only by a dim red light. Just as they finished there was a great noise on deck. "It is that bull coming on board," cried the mate,—and we bolted out of the cabin armed with a dagger and a pistol, which were two of the ornaments of the cabin; but the bull was on shore, whence his eyes gleamed in the darkness. The skipper had left his rod on the cabin-top and his line in the river with a live bait attached, and now the line was being pulled out at a great rate, and the big wooden reel was thumping about on deck. Something monstrous was on, but if it were a pike it was a very sluggish one. In the dark it was ticklish work landing it; and in the midst of the excitement the captain came picking his way along the rond clad in his night attire and knee-boots. By the light of a

candle we found that the fish was a large eel, the largest we had seen. It had taken a good-sized live bait at mid-water. We ultimately got it into the landing-net, and kept it there until morning, when the captain undertook the cooking of it. It was cut into chunks, parboiled, and then fried, and five of us ate it for breakfast. We had no means of ascertaining its weight, but at a guess it was five pounds. The next morning the bull was still in the same spot, within ten yards of the yachts, which he was afraid to approach, although he was not in the least afraid of any person who emerged from the vessels on to the bank. We felt sure he would have passed us in the night, and it was rather a nuisance to have so pugnacious a spectator. All that glorious August day we were very lazy. We walked into the village of Martham to buy provisions; we fished and caught more roach, perch, and pike than we wanted; we photographed, bathed, and explored various long and lilled dikes, and the lonely sheet of water known as Somerton Broad, but all in the most leisurely and lounging way it is possible to conceive. The wind was fair for every way we wished to sail, and was soft and fragrant with the hay then being carried. There was no one visible, and no sign of human life as far as the eye could reach, except occasionally when, from some opening in the reeds, a large boat piled up with hay, a floating stack hiding its support, was poled by two or three men. The coarse marsh-hay, used principally for fodder, is cut and piled up by the banks of the dikes, and is then carried by boats to some convenient spot where it is unloaded to await a further removal to the stack. The picturesque nature of this method of hay-carrying is further heightened by the costume of the hay-makers.

Some time ago this part of the country was inundated with straw hats, said to be Chinese, having enormous brims, and sold for a penny apiece. These now form the usual summer head-gear of the labourers on the marshes. A large yellow straw hat with a broad red ribbon round it, a blue jersey, and great thigh boots, formed the hay-making costume on the Martham Dikes. The men have good-looking faces, with long pointed beards, and are usually tall and spare, with a serious cast of countenance befitting the loneliness of their occupation.

The usual routine of the day was this. At seven o'clock the skipper would awake, and would, other persuasions failing, let down the hammock of the mate to induce him to rise. Then the awning was turned back, the bedding put upon the cabin-top to air, the cabin cleared, and the kettle set to boil, while the skipper and mate bathed and made their morning toilet. Then one of us went to the nearest farm for milk and eggs, while the other fried the bacon or fish and made the coffee. Breakfast over, came the task of washing-up and stowing away, scrubbing the decks and tidying, by which time it would be ten o'clock; then sailing and exploring until evening, when came dinner or tea. Then a quiet evening's fishing, reading, and talking; and finally hammocks at ten, and a sound, sound sleep till morning.

That night we moored by a steam drainage mill, and we inspected the machinery. Surely there must be some better way of raising the water from the lower level of the drains to the higher level of the river than the turbine-wheel, which is everywhere used. This is a narrow wheel of great diameter, with floats like those of a steamer's paddle-wheel. It revolves in a narrow trough to which the drain-water has free access, and dashes the water up

to the higher level. Many of the older mills, and indeed many if not most of the houses by the rivers, lean one way or another, through the sinking of the foundations in soft earth. Like Holland, this is a country of leaning walls. A tall tower of one of the mills on the Waveney leans over in a most remarkable manner, in apparent defiance of the laws of gravitation.

Next morning we were aroused by a roar from the captain. He was bathing, and had his toe unexpectedly seized by a cray-fish. He was fond of cray-fish, however, and spent a long time fishing with his toe for another bite, in hopes of catching the dainty crustacean. Although his patience met with much encouragement from us, he did not succeed. At what age, we wonder, does one cease to be a boy, provided one's digestion is good and one's conscience kind? There were four big fellows, who would be sedate enough in a town, as full of pranks as four schoolboys. Would that all the fun and jollity made up of trifles could be pictured in print! It would be better than any medicine to many a man.

The reeds were madly convulsed by a strong south-west wind, and we hoisted sail and parted with the yawl for a space, to explore Horsey Mere and Hickling. We turned out of the Sounds into a deep dike, which was so narrow that we could scarcely have turned in it. Its width was under ten yards, and the bends were sharp and numerous. We lowered the peak to lessen our speed, but we tore along with the broom brushing the tops of the reeds, and the swell caused by our passage washing high up their stems. We had met a wherry at the entrance, where there was just room for us to squeeze past. What we should have done if we had met her further in, we hardly know. The dike was a mile and a half in

length, and at the end of it we emerged into Horsey Mere; a mere enchanting if not enchanted—there was no sound save

“The long ripple washing in the reeds.”

If we had the brand of Excalibur to fling into the mere, surely from its flashing waters would rise the arm

“Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,”

to catch it by the hilt and draw it under in the mere.

It was a circular lake with a border of reeds and low alder-bushes. Perfect utter loneliness reigned there: the water was clear and bright. No objects were visible on the western half of the horizon save a distant sail; and on the east, nothing but a range of high sand-hills sharply defined against the blue sky; beyond there was the roar of the sea. We left the Coya anchored in the middle of the mere, its lonely queen, while we rowed ashore and walked to the sea, a mile and a half away. Topping a great sand-bank, a vast seascape spread below us, covered with vessels of many rigs. The busy appearance of this scene was a deep contrast to the silent region of mere and reed which lay behind us. Horsey Mere is thirty miles by water from the sea, and a mile and a half by land, and there are but a few feet difference in the level. The rise and fall of the tide at Yarmouth are felt at Horsey. The clouds were gathering in huge and threatening masses, and the wind was rising; so after a long swim in the salt water, we walked back to Horsey. We should have liked to have caught some of its famous pike,—

“Horsey pike,
None like,”

is the distich,—but the storm was coming up. We donned our water-proofs and sou'-westers, and got

under way, for we wished to be at Hickling that night.

Our friends on the yawl saw us cross Whiteslea and enter Hickling Broad, and then we passed out of their sight, but they saw following us a whirlwind lifting the reed-stalks,—a regular “Rodges Blast,”—and they were anxious for our safety. We were warned of it by the roar it made passing through a small wood, and we topped our boom and lowered our peak just as it caught us. It struck us dead aft with a bewildering force, and then the Coya recovered from the shock, and tore along before it at a quicker pace than she had ever gone before, rolling from side to side and wallowing in the surf the tempest raised in the shallow water, with sudden and frequent jibes as the course of the wind shifted to and fro. The Broad was white with foam, and seemed suddenly increased in size. We ran to Hickling Staithe just as the gust steadied down into half a gale from the south-west. These Rodges Blasts seem to come with a south-west wind. We remember one day waiting on the staithe at Coldham on the Yare whistling for a wind, while the cutter *Zoe* with all sail set was moored by a strong rope to a tree. It was a dead hot calm, when, without any warning, a whirling puff of wind came upon us. The *Zoe* was thrown over almost on her beam-ends; she snapped the mooring-rope like a piece of thread, shot out into the river, and then luffed up herself—there was no one on board—and drove her bowsprit through the wood-casing of the staithe and deep into the soil behind, whence it was a work of time to extricate it. The blast passed in a moment, and there was again a dead calm.

The thunder-clouds came up from the south-west and made the darkness of that night between the lightning-flashes a thing to be re-

membered. At each flash the white water of the Broad and the tossing and bending reeds were brilliantly visible, and then we could not see each other as we stood together on the deck. The roll of the thunder over the watery waste was most awe-inspiring, and yet between the crashes, in fiendish contrast to the majesty of the night, were the loud and impious ravings of a drunken solitary wretch who lived in a little hut hard by, and who had chosen this night of all others for an outbreak of blasphemous rage. The lightning was striking the trees near, yet this man's cottage was mercifully passed by. Near us a drainage windmill had been carelessly left going, or had broken its fastenings, and the sails were whirling madly round, while the whole structure creaked and groaned, and its levers thumped as if in excited response to the storm. For long we stood and

"Saw God divide the night with flying flame."

Over a wet bit of meadow close by there hovered a small flickering phosphorescent light, always visible in the darkness; but when the lightning-flashes illumined the spot, there was neither man, beast, or thing there, nor any cover for such. The light was clearly natural, and in all probability a veritable Will-o'-the-wisp. It was late ere we took to our hammocks, but then neither the war of the elements nor the great noise of the torrents of rain on our decks kept us from sleeping. In the early morning the storm cleared away, but the wind was still high. A wherryman came on board to inspect our little yacht, and we told him about the Will-o'-the-wisp. He said he had seen them several times, and that he had fired at them—the shock of the explosion putting them out. If you did not fire at them, they

were likely to come near you and "do you some hurt." He saw one once which seemed much larger and more locomotive than ordinary, and he followed it with his gun for some distance. When he at last overtook it, he raised his gun to fire, when a voice came from the darkness. He had been stalking a man who was gathering worms, and whose lantern, held close to the ground, had misled him.

The next day, with two reefs in our sail, we sailed back again over Whiteslea, the Sounds, and up the Hundred Stream past Martham, in search of the yawl.

We found her moored in a corner of most sylvan loveliness, under the lee of a copse, and amid the water-lilies. There was no one on board; and trying fishing, we found we had hit upon an anglers' paradise; and we fished until we were tired of pulling out the perch and roach from a deep clear pool at the bend of the stream. Then the crew of the yawl appeared out of a long dike which they had been exploring, holding up a pike in triumph, for they were enthusiastic fishermen. We sailed back in company to Heigham bridges without any incident save the atrocious misses which the skipper made when he shot at any passing fowl. "If this goes on," quoth the mate, "the birds will get cheeky." At Heigham we set off to photograph the ruined church tower of Bastwick, the skipper carrying the *impedimenta*. The mate burst out into a laugh, and said, "I have been wondering what you looked like. I have it now. You are precisely like a travelling acrobat, with your india-rubber shoes, white trousers too tight and too short for you, blue jersey, red cap, chin like an aged broom, black box, and bundle of sticks—ha, ha, ha!"

Now the skipper had left off

shaving, thinking that in a fortnight he could grow a luxuriant beard; but it was only isolated hairs which grew luxuriantly—the others didn't. So he felt that part of the gibe, and responded in kind.

"And you look like the tramp in the song, 'homeless, ragged, and tanned;'" but, like the same happy fellow, there were 'none so free in the land, none so contented as we.'"

We left Heigham with a fair wind and a strong wind, all sail set, and sped along at the rate of a good eight miles an hour, with jibes that brought the twenty-foot boom slashing over with a force that tried the mate's arms as he rallied in the main-sheet. Then we entered the Bure again, and turning to the right had a stiff beat against the tide to St Benedict's Abbey, which we photographed. A mile further we came to the mouth of the river Ant, up which we turned with the intention of making Barton Broad that night. We lowered the mast at Ludham bridge, the smallest bridge on the rivers, and after sailing a mile or two further the wind dropped entirely. We determined not to be done, and as the banks were pretty firm, we took it in turns to tow. While the skipper was trudging along with the rope on his shoulders, a donkey came trotting up to him with a sympathetic bray, plainly saying, "Are you too reduced to this labour? I know what it is; look at the marks on my shoulders." And the ass actually walked side by side with the skipper, brushing against him and looking up at him in the most comical way, until they were stopped by a dike which necessitated the skipper getting on board again.

It was a perfect afternoon and evening. A hot sun shone out of a cloudless sky upon the hay-fields where the hay-makers were turning or carry-

ing the hay, the corn-fields where the corn was fast ripening, upon the still placid surface of the canal-like river, which was dimpled by rising fish, and hottest of all upon the patient backs of the skipper or the mate as each in turn hauled at the tow-line. Peace and contentment reigned everywhere: the eel-fisher mending his long array of nets; that red-coated soldier teaching that yellow-haired little girl to fish; that boat-load of patient, quiet, and successful anglers; those sleek satin-coated cows, apparently gazing at their own reflections in the water; the old gentleman seated in an arm-chair at the foot of his garden, also fishing,—all seemed blissfully content with the charming present. Then we passed Irstead shoals, where the river is but five feet deep, with a level hard gravel bottom beloved of perch. Then came one of the most picturesque eel-fisher's abodes we had seen, being a small yacht hauled up on the bank, and propped up, with the stern cut off, and a ladder leading into the cabin. Then Irstead Church on a wooded hill and very beautiful. This church and the eel-hut we photographed next day.

All at once we glided on to the Broad and dropped our anchor in its silent waters. The sun was setting behind a church on the opposite side—the tower of which was silhouetted on the great red disc. In the water beneath, a narrow well-defined band of crimson light stretched across the lake towards us, and down the centre of this was the equally well-defined black shadow of the church tower. As this singular sunset faded away the air became filled with myriads of swallows. No words could give an adequate idea of the swarming multitudes, nor the bewildering effect to the eye as they fled to and fro over the water, and as far upwards as the eye could

see them. As the dusk deepened they gathered into a vast cloud and quickly disappeared in an easterly direction. It was the 12th of August, and although the date was so early, there can be little doubt that we witnessed the commencement of their migration. As the night drew on and the stars shone clear and bright in the dark-blue cloudless sky, a brilliant meteor shot across the heavens. Then another and another, and presently, for the space of an hour or more, there was a constant succession of falling stars. We saw them as brilliantly in the water beneath as we did overhead; and no observer of the star-shower which fell that night could have been better placed than we were.

At three o'clock the next morning the mate awoke the skipper and said, "There is some one getting on board." The skipper emerged, wrathful at being disturbed from his comfortable hammock. There was a man with a boat holding on to the yacht.

"What do you want?" growled the skipper.

"I've brought you a fine tench for your breakfast, sir," said an unknown voice.

"I don't want to buy it."

"And I don't want to sell it to you. If you can't take it as a present, I'll hull (throw) it overboard." And he left the skipper with a fine four-pound tench alive and kicking in his arms like a baby. The man did not stop to be thanked. He was an utter stranger, except that he may have been an eel-fisher with whom the mate had a short conversation the night before.

Barton Broad is a fine sheet of water, being 200 acres in extent. Its shores half-way round are prettily wooded, and it has one or two islands. There are several channels marked out by posts, and they have a fair depth; but if you get out of

them, you may get stuck on one of the "hills," as the natives term the shallow portions. While we were there, a wherry, with a picnic-party on board, got on and remained there half the day. The bottom is soft mud of an unknown depth, offering little resistance to the quant when one shoves. A steam-launch and a few boat loads of people made the Broad less lonely than those we had lately been on. A party of workmen sailing to their work down the river, the boat laden with windows, door-frames, and paint-pots, was a sight characteristic of a neighbourhood where the water is the chief highway. We spent the morning sailing about and catching pike, and then we desired to post some letters and buy some fresh meat. We rowed in the jolly to Irstead, but we found there was neither shop nor post-office in the village. We went to Barton, where, after a long walk, we found a person who sold us some fresh pork; but there was no post-office, and the people did not know where there was one, but there might be one at Neatished, three miles away. So we tipped a boy to go in search of a post-office. As our letters reached their destination he ultimately found one.

We boiled the tench and a pike for dinner, and very good the former was. The pork-chops we unfortunately had for supper. In the evening we drifted quietly off the Broad, and three miles down the river, and then lay to for the night. We had another disturbance. The skipper forgot to take in his rod, and during the night a pike seized the bait, and made a clatter with the reel. The pork-chops were heavy on our consciences, and we were greatly startled at the sudden noise. We had to go on the road to land the pike, which was a good one; and it must have been a comi-

cal sight,—two shivering white-robed figures hauling out a pike by the light of a candle. The pike was knocked on the head and placed in a locker amid the empty bottles. We were hard asleep again when a dreadful clatter made us jump out of our hammocks and almost out of our skins. It was the resuscitated pike testifying his indignation among the bottles.

Next morning the sun rose hotter than ever, and we felt disinclined to exertion. We gave the pike to a man who was going to and fro with a large boat carrying hay. Shortly afterwards he came to the skipper, and said, "Did you give me two pike, sir?"

"No; only one. Why do you ask?"

"Well, sir, ten minutes after I left you, there was another pike in the bottom of the boat still alive, and lying by the other, and exactly the same size. I can't make it out."

He evidently doubted the skipper's veracity; for presently he went to the mate and asked him the same question, to which the same answer was given. The man was too polite to tell us we were liars, but he evidently thought so. How the second pike got there we had no idea, except that it may have leaped on board of itself. We frequently read in the 'Field' of large trout leaping into boats on the Thames, and this pike may have followed their insane example. As the wind was fair we made a flying start, or rather we attempted to do so; but the sail would not go up. The peak-halliard had not been hooked on. This omission was rectified, and the sail hoisted, when the peak unhooked itself, and down came the gaff, the hook of the halliard flying up to the block. There was nothing for it but to climb the mast; and the skipper accordingly swarmed up the slender, slippery spar, twenty-seven feet in

height, and brought the truant hook down. Then the forestay was found unfastened. "I tell you what," said the skipper, as he lay panting in the cabin, "this is going to be an unlucky day. We must take especial care when we lower the mast at Ludham, or we shall meet with an accident; and this cabin, which is generally cool, is as hot as an oven."

Lowering and raising the mast of the Coya is an operation which takes all the strength and skill of two men, and a slip when it was half-way down would be serious. As we were in an unlucky vein, we took especial care, and accomplished the undertaking without any mishap, except that the skipper greased the mast when it was down, that the jaws of the gaff might travel freely; and then, forgetting the grease, kept his best blue jacket on while lifting it, and so spoilt the cloth for ever. Ludham bridge is very small; and a light wherry being high in the water has much difficulty in squeezing through. We photographed one in the act. It was intensely hot, and we did not know what to drink. Beer is out of the question, claret is rasping, lemonade does not quench the thirst; lime-juice and water, milk and water, and weak cold tea, are the best. We kept our liquids icy cold by the simple expedient of wrapping the bottles or jugs in wet towels, and exposing them to the sun. The hotter the sun and the quicker the evaporation, the colder was the liquid. We tried wetting our pugarees, too, to keep our heads cool.

After leaving the Ant we sailed up the Bure with a fresh breeze across the river, which somewhat mitigated the heat. Turning down a long straight dike on the left, we entered Ranworth Broad and dropped our anchor opposite the church. Presently spoke the mate, "No

wonder the cabin was so hot ! We put the cooking stove away alight, and there it has been burning for five hours." Here we lunched and spent the middle of the day lying on the deck basking in the sun, watching the great bream bending the rushes as they swam in the shallow margins, listening to the cries of coot and water-hen and duck, and the sleepy insect murmur ; then it occurred to us that yonder water-laved lawn with its great trees, the house half seen through flowers, and the church above and beyond all, should be photographed. The plate was duly exposed ; and then the mate, in a fit of absent-mindedness, unscrewed the lens to examine it, leaving the plate still exposed, and, of course, ruined. The mate's denunciations of his own stupidity were certainly justified. We took another photograph and then hoisted sail and sailed back into the dike. Along this we had to quant, as the wind was ahead and the dike too narrow to tack in. The skipper poled her along, and about half-way up he placed his quant on a lily-root which held until he got his weight on to it and then gave way : the quant went through, and the skipper followed it souse into the water, which was ten feet deep. "Keep her going !" he cried, as soon as his head reappeared ; and regaining his pole he swam after the yacht, clambered on board, and was again poling away before he quite realised that he had been overboard. The worst of it was that he had donned his shore-going suit, and of course there was not a dry thread in it. Most sailormen become a little superstitious, and we took this as a warning that if we went on sailing that day we might culminate in something serious. So when we reached Horning Ferry, a river-side inn where anglers resort, we lay to for the night and got the

wet things dried at the inn. We had compressed more mishaps into a short sail of ten miles than happened to us during the whole of the rest of our fortnight's cruise. The moral was, not to eat pork-chops for supper. The skipper woke early, and finding it was a lovely morning, caught a small roach, put it on the live-bait hook and threw out his pike-line. Then he lay in his hammock watching the butt-end of his rod and fell asleep again. When he awoke the rod was plunging violently, and sixty yards of line were out, the reel being emptied. Rousing the mate, he got his rod and went ashore to follow the pike down the river, the mate following with the landing-net. They were still under the impression that it was five o'clock in the morning, and they made no addition to their robes of "white samite, mystic, wonderful." It was in fact eight o'clock ; and when they had followed the fish some way from the yacht, reeling in line, they became aware that they were the "cynosure of all eyes" in a fleet of fishing-boats then leaving the inn. It took some time to land the fish, which was a 7-pounder, and had got under the weeds ; and the mate urgently begged the skipper never again to fish save within reasonable hours, and in correct costume.

From Horning Ferry to Wroxham is nine miles, and that was the extent of our day's sail. It is perhaps the most beautiful stretch on the three rivers. Woods, meadows, corn-fields, eel-sets, yachts, wherries, boats, crowd upon the eye. Lilled pulk-holes, green-bordered shadowy dikes, and sequestered broads, invite detours and explorations. The clear brimming river laves the drooping grasses and the blue forget-me-nots. The deep purple fringes of the reeds toy with the bending branches and rustling leaves of oak and alder.

The jewelled kingfisher sways on a yielding flag, with a yellow iris-flower bending over his blue back. As the seasons change, so the colours of the river-side vegetation change; and when the great leaves of the water-docks are yellow, and the trees drop their many tinted leaves on the dimpled river, the gorgeous masses of colour, and the variety of them, are beyond any feeble words of ours to picture.

We sailed to and fro as fancy willed, or the breeze blew, and in the gloaming anchored on Wroxham Broad, where we watched the western light die away, the stars glimmer out one by one in the sky, often first seen in the water. Moonlight nights, that cruise we had none; but often and often on these lonely waters have we felt the sweet charm of the soft moonshine when the quiet lake and the whispering reeds were clothed with the chastened brilliance.

As we passed Horning village, the children greeted us with a song with which the children of Horning have greeted every passing yacht for generations,—

“Ho, John Barleycorn! ho, John Barleycorn!

All day long I raise my song—
Ho, John Barleycorn!”

The motive of the song is of course *coppers*. Its origin is unknown; but even the three-year-old toddlers join in, and the general effect is pleasing.

Saturday came, and fresh meat was wanted. There was none to be had at Wroxham, but there was a butcher at Coltishall, two miles by road, eight by river, so we sailed there. When the butcher was found, there was but one piece of meat left, but it was a capital loin of mutton, and we had sumptuous dinners on Saturday and Sunday. Coltishall is a typical English vil-

lage, and picturesque withal. Just above is the first lock on these waters, and spanning the side stream is Horstead Mill, which made a pretty photograph. A Norfolk water-mill is, *sui generis*, very large and very old. It is usually built across the stream, so that the undershot wheels may be worked by the full force of the stream. There is not sufficient fall to work an overshot wheel.

On Monday we sailed about near Wroxham Broad, having ladies on board. At their bidding we gathered them the red berries of the guelder-roses, and water-lilies, and purple reed-tops; and we have made a vow that we will never have guelder-rose berries on board again, for the litter they and the brittle branches make is past belief. While anchored on Salhouse Little Broad, we fed a shoal of rudd with crumbs. The fine, fat, crimson-finned, golden-eyed beauties jostled each other in their eagerness to take the crumbs, almost out of our hands; and when one ran off with an extra large piece of bread, others followed him, and there was a fine swaying of the lily-leaves as the eager fish struggled beneath them.

So ended our cruise. To the man who cares for sailing and fishing, and to the artist, we heartily recommend a similar cruise. It may not be very exciting or eventful, but it is very jolly, and very cheap. The cost of provisioning yourself is easily calculated. The cost of hiring a yacht and man is from £3 to £5 a-week; and two or three fellows would find the divided expense very light indeed compared to other modes of spending a holiday. Norwich, Yarmouth, and Lowestoft are the headquarters of yachts for hire; and local inquiry, or advertisement, will soon elicit the necessary information.

A TALK ABOUT ODES.*

Geoffrey. So we three have met again!

Basil. Yes; and not "in thunder, lightning, or in rain," but on an April morning, when spring looks like herself. We can gaze upwards and feast our eyes on Dante's "Dolce color d'oriental zaffiro;" or downwards to mark on our beloved lake his "tremolar della marina." Look how its waters quiver with tremulous light as the sunbeam smites them; and break forth into that "many-twinkling smile" which Æschylus saluted long before!

Geof. Will you accept this little wood, through which our upward path goes, as a representative of the glade to which Sordello guided Virgil and Dante? If so, our young friend here shall "disfigure or present" the person of the last-named; for I know that he has been reading very hard for his degree, and so conversing more with the dead than the living.

Henry. I have emerged from that under-world "with slow faint steps and much exceeding pain." Do not remind me of my sufferings; for the hour is fast approaching when I must plunge in again.

Geof. Your look is not such as to bespeak compassion. You have not been down to the lower circles. Your stay has been chiefly, I trust, in those "open and luminous" spaces where Dante walked among the great Greeks and Romans,—the wide plains of philosophy stretched out beneath the empurpled ether of poetry.

Bas. (from the wood). Come in and admire, instead of talking nonsense outside. This is of a surety that mountain-glade where Dante

saw the holy kings and princes resting: the white cherry-blossom floats overhead, underneath the black-thorn spreads out the white coral of its little branches; the violet and the primrose peep forth from the bright green moss; here and there the celandine paves the floor with gold, and the wood-anemone opens its starry petals to their widest, and gems every spot in the grove.

Geof. Not a bad Northern version, is it, of the many hues which variegated the Florentine's green herbage? But it is yet early afternoon, and he visited his glen at nightfall: our trees are yet leafless; his waved fresh and tender green over the angels who descended at the sound of the "Te lucis ante."

Bas. We, too, have a winged choir, and a better one than we deserve, to listen to. Hear how the thrushes and the blackbirds are paying us for the pains with which we fed them through the winter! And if the larch plumelets are all the greenery that we yet can boast of, still

"Gentle western blasts, with downy wings

Hatching the tender springs,
To the unborn buds with vital whispers say,

'Ye living buds, why do ye stay?'

The passionate buds break through the bark their way."

One can almost hear them at it.

Hen. English verse sounds pleasant to my ears after hard searchings into the meaning of difficult Greek choruses. Which of our poets are you quoting?

Bas. Cowley: I think, but I am not sure, that those lines are in his "Ode on Life."

* See 'A Talk about Sonnets,' 'Blackwood's Magazine,' vol. cxxviii., August 1880.

Geof. That is the ode which perhaps gave Blake his fine idea of "The Gate of Death," which his old man, bowed down with years, creeps through, to emerge vigorous and youthful on the farther side. I mean the words—

"When we by a foolish figure say,
'Behold an old man dead!' then they
Speak properly, and cry, 'Behold a man-
child born!'"

Hen. Who are "they"?

Geof. The angels: those same who bear Faust's new-born soul, and find it a sore burden even for their loving arms.

Bas. Cowley expresses the same idea in another good simile—

"We seek to close and plaster up by
art

The cracks and breaches of the ex-
tended shell;

And, in their narrow cell,
Would rudely force to dwell

The noble, vigorous bird already winged
to part."

Hen. Is Cowley a favourite poet of yours?

Bas. At one time of my life he was; and though his odes do not, any one of them, live in my memory as a whole, yet many lines of his still linger there. Some novels, and some poetry, of the present day make me exclaim with him—

"'Tis just

The author blush there where the reader
must,"

and long for a critic, with words sufficiently scathing, to compel him to the unwonted exercise. Cowley's words, too, rise to my lips at the sight of ambitious pieces of word-painting, where the writer has left nothing without an ornament—

"Jewels at nose and lips but ill appear;
Rather than all things wit let none be
there."

And Cowley's echo of Aristophanes rises to my lips when I listen to such

a concert of the birds as saluted us a few minutes ago in the wood which we are just leaving—

"Now blessings on ye all, ye heroic
race!

Who keep your primitive powers and
rights so well,

Though men and angels fell.

Of all material lives the highest place

To you is justly given,

And ways and walks the nearest heaven."

Hen. I see that Cowley did not wholly neglect alliteration.

Geof. What English poet, with any true fire of genius, could? It and rhyme are his two compensations for the loss of the exact quantities of classic verse; and he does not know his business if he does not make the most of them. Alliteration is the older and the more exclusively *English* resource of the two. From the bard who sang Athelstan's victory at Brunanburh, to the poet who sang Nelson's at the Baltic, we find it rise spontaneously to the lips of him who sings before he writes,—which, I take it, is the distinction of the genuine ode-singer from the writer of fine but uninteresting compositions so styled.

Hen. May I ask you two questions about that? First, What is an ode? I mean, when we speak of one, are we to think of Pindar, or of Horace?

Geof. Of either, or both. At least to me that is an ode which is the outpouring of feeling passionately excited by some dignified cause; whether it swell, like the Greek choric song in praise of god or hero, as a complicated chant, with part answering to part, now soft and flute-like, now with a thunderous roll of many voices, then at last leaving the ear satisfied with a grand final strain; or whether, like the odes in which, as we know, Horace imitated the lost Greek lyrists, it is content throughout

with one style of music, stanza responding to stanza without any variation. The essential thing, as it seems to me, is that the theme of an ode should be an elevated one, that its expression should be vehement and rapturous, that its singer, though still capable of self-control, should be lifted above his ordinary self by a strong poetic enthusiasm. As an example of what I mean, take Schiller's short dithyramb. You know it, Basil, in Coleridge's version, where it bears its first title, "The Visit of the Gods." It consists of three strophes, all moulded alike; both the measure and the words bespeak the wildest excitement; and although its muse is exotic, yet a true Greek for the moment, you see in Schiller, while he sings it, the rose-chapleted poet rising, goblet in hand, from the festive couch in Athens.

So, then, provided the "thoughts that breathe and words that burn" are given to us—whether it be with the marshalled order of Pindar's odes in point of structure, or with the irregular movements of his modern imitators; whether they rush forth with Pindar's startling vehemence and abrupt transitions of thought, or move onward more slowly, and more easily apprehended, with the stately majesty of Horace in his Triumphal Ode, or of Milton in his Ode on the Nativity,—we have in either case an ode: though perfect success in the more complicated and difficult variety being the hardest achievement, ought, I suppose, to win the highest praise.

Now for your second question, Henry, provided you let my first answer pass unopposed.

Hen. You distinguished the ode-singer from the ode-writer. What English author had you chiefly in your mind as a type of this last?

Geof. Poets like Collins, with his "Music, heavenly maid," his nymph "Cheerfulness," and her companions, "brown Exercise and Sport." Shadowy personages like these may be written about in the study, and read of in the drawing-room; but they cannot rouse a man's spirit till it pours forth floods of song, and sweeps every hearer along rejoicing in its mighty torrent.

Bas. Little rills, that trickle clear and tinkling down the hillside, like the one we are just crossing, have their uses. The moss grows green by them, the primrose tuft draws life from them, the song-bird sips them and goes his way happy. A poet who could write an ode like that of Collins to "Evening," must not be spoken of with contempt. There is poetic power, too, in his Ode to Liberty; though imperial Rome and medieval Venice are not fortunate examples of freedom,—to which honour he somewhat recklessly exalts them.

Hen. I thought, Geoffrey, that perhaps you were going to give us Gray for your instance. One of my tutors used to speak of him as a "languid conventionalist."

Bas. Unjust.

Geof. Severe; but with some, though slender, foundation in fact. Gray calls his two greatest odes "Pindaric." So they are in their abruptness and bold transitions; but Pindar sang of victories which stirred a Greek's heart to its depths,—sang of them when they were fresh, ere the horses had ceased panting after the chariot-race, the sweat dried off the victor's brow,—sang while above him floated the awe-inspiring forms of the gods and heroes from whom the conqueror he lauded boasted his descent. How could Gray feel in like manner impassioned by an abstract

subject like "The Progress of Poesy"? How could he altogether escape the reproach implied by the word "conventional"? His fairest similes, his noblest thoughts, are, through most of his ode, echoes, more or less conscious, of the great classic poets; only (for I utterly reject the accusation of "languid") the strength and sweetness with which they are expressed are his own. However, when he comes, at the close of his ode, to celebrate the peaceful triumphs of song on English ground,—a poet singing of poets never sung of in like strains before,—he is at once original and powerful. You may say that he over-praises Dryden—that he describes only one side of Shakespeare; but how faultlessly beautiful is his expression! And when he comes to Milton, what can be grander than his conception of the poet, struck blind, like Saul, by the vision of the exceeding Glory?

"Nor second he, that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy
The secrets of the Abyss to spy:
He passed the flaming bounds of Place
and Time;
The living Throne, the sapphire-blaze
Where Angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw; but blasted with excess of
light,
Closed his eyes in endless night."

Is there anything "languid" here? or anything "conventional"?

Hen. Just one thing perhaps,—the "wings of Ecstasy." As ecstasy simply means being carried out of one's self, the impersonation sounds strange. But I always thought that a splendid passage.

Geof. Milton has been fortunate in his admiring poet of our own century, as well as of the last. Not that I mean to put Tennyson's *Alcaics* on a level with that sublime strophe of Gray's.

Bas. I should think not, indeed.

As if there *could* be such a thing as real *Alcaics* in English!

Geof. No: but lines like that which tells how the plains of heaven

"Ring to the roar of an angel-onset,"

and those which speak of

"All that bowery loneliness,
The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,"

live in one's mind for years; and that is no bad test of their excellence.

Hen. That Ode to Milton of Tennyson's is at any rate a short one. Mr Swinburne has recently devoted fifty strophes, each nearly a page long, to celebrating the sublime perfections of Walter Savage Landor.

Bas. Don't talk to me about Swinburne. Let us return to Gray. I am inclined to think there is more of the *vivida vis*, the genuine poetic ardour, in his "Bard" than in his "Progress of Poesy;" entirely as I agree with all that you, Geoffrey, have said in praise of it. The subject, to begin with, is better suited to an ode, according to your account of one, which I approve of. Gray, not having much to sing about in his own proper person—only reflections on the vicissitudes of life, such as those with which the sight of Eton College inspired him (a solemn and touching lay, but hardly an ode according to our definition)—did wisely in transporting himself into the person of the ancient bard of Wales. There was the fall of an old polity to bewail; the cry for vengeance of tuneless brethren's innocent blood to send up with ringing notes to the skies; the divine justice, slow but sure, to mark, tracking the descendants of the guilty in response to it. Here Gray is indeed Pindaric, as he marshals the long procession of our kings and queens; not with

the toilsome and slow precision of a historian, but each, shrouded in darkness as to the rest of their career, revealed, as by a sudden lightning-flash, at the moment when they are wanted for the accomplishment of the sentence passed by the poet-prophet on their guilty line. If you want an example of how alliteration can reinforce lines strong enough in themselves, look at the five first of this poem:—

“Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!

Confusion on thy banners wait!

Though fanned by conquest's crimson wing,

They mock the air with idle state.

Helm nor hauberk's twisted mail,” &c.

If you wish to know how to intersperse trochaics with your iambics so as to bring out solemn and pathetic effects, look at the first and last of these five, and at lines like

“Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,”

and many more. How grandly pathetic, too, is the description of Edward III.'s closing days, so well contrasted with the careless jollity of his successor's first years!

Geof. The last strophe of the ode strikes me as rather artificial. The dying bard, consoled by the vision of his great successors, Spenser and Shakespeare, flourishing under a queen of British descent,—hearing Milton's voice and those of other English poets from the yet remoter distance,—is almost too gentle a termination. One is inclined to exclaim—

“Too softly falls the lay in fear and wrath begun.”

Hen. I hope you are not going to suggest that the suicide at the close had better have been omitted. It was always my special delight when I repeated the poem to my mother.

Geof. Those two closing lines and the explanation at the beginning are alien to the genuine nature of an ode. Strictly speaking, the bard should have been his own interpreter throughout. Still, we could ill bear the loss of Gray's introduction—that description of the bard when

“Loose his beard and hoary hair
Streamed like a meteor to the troubled
air,”

and the words which tell us how he

“With a master's hand and prophet's
fire
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.”

But an ode should only have one speaker—the poet himself, or the person whom he represents.

Hen. Pindar makes Medea speak at length in one of his odes, if I remember right.

Geof. Yes; he quotes her prophecy, being himself throughout the speaker. That is different. Still I do not think the digression an improvement.

Hen. Dryden's Ode for St Cecilia's Day,—“Alexander's Feast,” I mean—mixes up narration and song as Gray's “Bard” does.

Bas. What say you to that great example, Geoffrey? for that ode consists of Dryden's report of what Timotheus sang to Alexander (given in two instances in his own words), and of the diverse affections produced in the conqueror by his varied strain. He tells us, if I recollect right, how, at the appeal to the king's pride, by the announcement of his divine parentage, Alexander

“Assumes the god;

Affects to nod,

And seems to shake the spheres,”—

how, having drunk deep draughts at the skilful musician's praise of

Bacchus, the king (as his meanest soldier might)

“Fought all his battles o’er again,
And thrice he routed all his foes, and
thrice he slew the slain,”—

how Timotheus drew tears from him
by his sad picture of

“Darius great and good
Fallen from his high estate,”—

how he led him for a moment to
prefer love to war, when

“War, he sung, is toil and trouble,
Honour but an empty bubble,
Never ending, still beginning;
Fighting still, and still destroying:
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, O think, it worth enjoying,”—

and how, finally, he led him to fire
Persepolis by his weird chant, in
which the Furies shrieked for ven-
geance, pointing to the ghosts of
the unburied Greek soldiers. Is
not that one of the best of English
odes?

Geof. Yes.

Bas. Does it not amply justify
Gray?

Geof. Nothing can justify a poet
but success; precedent is for sen-
ates and law-courts, not for the
higher assembly of the Muses. If
Dryden’s and Gray’s poetic fervour
is equal in the two compositions,
enabling each to fuse his hetero-
geneous materials into a perfect
whole—if each has *sung* throughout,
and not had to drop into a stum-
bling kind of sing-song reading in
places,—then both are justified. I
am sure of this in Dryden’s case.

Hen. Does not the pure, holy
Cecilia of Raphael’s great picture
come in rather oddly at the end of
that very pagan poem?

Bas. We cannot deny that.
While unrivalled as depicting the
power of music in earthly things,
Dryden’s venal muse could not get
far in delineating its higher uses.
He is more religious in his other

song for St Cecilia’s Day, which
ends with the chorus:—

“As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sang the great Creator’s praise
To all the blest above;
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky.”

Geof. Who told him that the
“living would die” at the last
day? I have read, “We shall
not all sleep, but we shall all be
changed.”

Bas. Ah! we must look to the
great poet of Dryden’s century, to
Milton, for exact theology in verse.
How noble is *his* song on “A
Solemn Music”! Dryden is pre-
sumptuous enough to speak of notes
sung on earth,

“That wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above,”

and to assure us that when Cecilia
chanted to her organ,

“An angel heard, and straight ap-
peared—
Mistaking earth for heaven;”

whereas Milton more modestly bids
Music transport our minds on high
by imaging to us the purer strains
above; and tells the

“Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice
and Verse,”

to present to our “high-raised
phantasy”

“That undisturbèd song of pure concent,
Aye sung before the sapphire-coloured
throne

To Him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout and solemn jubilee;
Where the bright Seraphim in burning
row

Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow;
And the Cherubic host in thousand quires
Touch their immortal harps of golden
wires,

With those just spirits that wear victori-
ous palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly.”

Geof. How glorious, also, are the stanzas in his great Ode on the Nativity, on the song of the sons of God at the beginning of the new creation!—

“Such music (as ’tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanced world on hinges
hung;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy
channel keep.”

Bas. Go on: give us Milton’s invocation to the music of the spheres, which is to bring back the age of gold, with rainbow-orbed Truth and Justice, to the sons of men.

Geof. I will not. The hill at this point becomes exceeding steep, even as the Hill Difficulty whereof Bunyan wrote. It is praiseworthy beyond measure, when climbing the ascents of virtue, to “keep the hindmost foot ever the lower,” as Virgil bade Dante when going up the hill of Purgatory: but you two are obeying the precept literally, and with portentous speed too; and if a middle-aged man like myself is to keep up with two such heedless young persons (for you, Basil, are younger than any of us), I must save my breath. Besides, that grand ode should be taken as a whole.

Bas. How different is Milton’s use, towards its end, of the heathen deities, to their conventional appearances in the poetry of the last century! To him they are real,—evil spirits deluding mankind into paying them homage by their lying wonders, and driven reluctantly back to their dark abodes by the powerful beams of the Sun of Righteousness. How grandly he shows us the Delphic oracle put to silence by the advent of the Word!—

“The oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the archèd roof in words
deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos
leaving.
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the
prophetic cell.”

Geof. That is indeed an instance of well-applied classical knowledge. How often it is misapplied now! There is something truly majestic there in the march of Milton’s words—contrasting beautifully, in their dignified sternness, with the tenderer and more pathetic lines which follow, and lament the beauty, linked to so many delusions, which perished with them for a while. Do you think the hillside we are scaling, and the small cascade which has just come into sight, heard anything on that day of sorrow of which Milton speaks, when

“The lonely mountains o’er,
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard and loud
lament;
From haunted spring, and dale
Edged with poplar pale,
The parting genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-enwoven tresses torn,
The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled
thickets mourn”?

Bas. The Naiad might well be sorry to leave that cool bath. Look how absolutely clear the water is! You can count every pebble. There is the industrious little waterfall above it, as hard at work as ever, enlarging the recess below for the fair tenant who will never come back to it. She seems, however, to have carried the flowers away with her in her long silky coils of hair. There are none to be seen now.

Geof. Come back six weeks hence and you will find turquoises set in gold waiting to adorn her—the forget-me-not and the marsh-

marigold; and very likely, on this swampy slope down to the stream, a fair carpet for her feet of globe-flowers, mingling their paler yellow with the rich lilac of the mealy primrose. Before then, that heeberry-bush will have thrown out its graceful white pendants, and the mountain-ash, which dips its branches in the foam of the fall, will have promised us stores of red coral in autumn by pretty bunches of white blossom. Then, too, the green bracken will be waving its graceful fronds over those cold grey rocks, and this fellside grass, now brown as winter, will refresh the eye with green.

Bas. And what a vivid green it is! That pious priest whom I heard preaching on the Creation in Milan Cathedral when I was last in Italy, and who dilated so much on God's goodness in making the earth, not black to sadden, or red to affright, but green to delight, the eye, would burst into double raptures of thankfulness if he could visit our lakes in summer.

Hen. (returning from an excursion to a rock under the fall). I have been thinking what a pity it is that Milton was not a Royalist. What an ode he might have written on the death of Charles I.!

Geof. Perhaps. But the greatest occasions do not always draw forth the best poetry. As it is, the best lines which celebrate the king's fate were written by a political foe. It is Andrew Marvell who says of Charles—

“He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try,

Nor called the gods with vulgar spite
To vindicate his helpless right,
But bowed his comely head
Down as upon a bed.”

Bas. Cowley speaks in a higher strain, though, of the monarch

“To whom alone was given
The double royalty of earth and
heaven,
Who crowned the kingly with the martyr's crown.”

Hen. Speaking of a poet's generosity to a fallen foe, do you think much of the often-quoted example of Horace's civility to poor Cleopatra? A beautiful woman, and one who died in so tragic a manner, might well be forgiven, after death had made her harmless.

Bas. You mean the three stanzas in the “Triumphal Ode.” Can you say them to us, Geoffrey, in Martin's version, which I remember thinking such a particularly good one?

Geof. Do they not run thus?—

“For hers no spirit was to perish meanly:
A woman, yet not womanishly weak,
She ran her galley to no sheltering creek,
Nor quailed before the storm, but met
it queenly.

So to her lonely palace-halls she came,
With eye serene their desolation viewed:
Then with firm hand the angry aspik
wooded
To dart its deadliest venom through her
frame.

So with a prideful smile she sank; for
she
Had robbed Rome's galleys of their richest
prize:
Queen to the last,—and in no humbled
guise.
To swell the triumph's haughty page-
antry.”

Bas. That is pretty well, considering that the wily Egyptian lady had outwitted Horace's master, Augustus, and deprived him and the expectant Roman crowd of a pleasant holiday-sight.

Hen. But that is not the whole of the ode. Earlier on, Horace speaks very ill of Cleopatra indeed.

Bas. He could not speak worse of her than she deserved.—I declare that Martin has improved on Horace in that third stanza: that “prideful smile” of his is very good, and so is his “queen to the last.”

Hen. Has he been equally successful with Catullus?

Bas. I am ashamed to say that I have not read his version. I should like, though, some day, to see what he has made of that melancholy Epithalamium of his, and that pretty, but most discouraging, comparison of the rose, so prized in the bud, so despised when she has done setting her petals wide open.

Geof. Heathen poets might well write sadly about marriage. They did not know what we Christians know about it. Now, contrast Catullus with a *really* Christian poet—Spenser, for example.

Hen. Spenser unites a good many happy couples in the course of that long but most delightful “Faëry Queen” of his.

Bas. I am glad you delight in it, my dear boy! (A man to all others, you will let *me* call you so a little longer, I know.) It is good, as well as pleasant, to dwell among his types of Christian knighthood. But Geoffrey was thinking of Spenser’s great bridal-ode, made for his own wedding—an ode which has always seemed to me a very great achievement, because its rapturous joy, sustained at highest pitch throughout, without one under-note of sorrow, never palls on the ear.

Hen. Yes, that is wonderful. It is so much easier, in song as in real life, to “weep with those that weep” than to “rejoice with those who rejoice.”

Geof. Poor Spenser! What sorrows followed that joyful song of his! But at any rate, he was happy when he wrote it, and that is something. He was happy listening to the birds on his wedding-morning:

“Hark how the cheerful birds do chaunt
their Layes,

And carol of Love’s praise
The merry lark her matins sings aloft,
The thrush replies, the mavis descant
plays,

The onzel shrills, the ruddock warbles
soft;

So goodly all agree, with sweet consent,
To this Day’s merriment.

Ah! my dear Love, why do ye sleep thus
long,

When meeter were that ye should now
awake,

T’ await the coming of your joyous make,
And hearken to the birds’ love-learnèd
song

The dewy leaves among?
For they of joy and pleasance to you
sing,

That all the woods them answer and
their echo ring.”

He was happy when he called on
the Hours to dress his lady for
the bridal, and bade the Graces

“Help to adorn my beautifullest bride.”

That superlative, which would have
shocked Lindley Murray, gives
one a notion of the exuberance
of his delight, which the minstrels
and the shouting crowd can
hardly proclaim loudly enough for
him. And when the bride comes
forth ready-decked from her chamber—
like the moon, as he tells us,
in her gentle dignity—with what
rapture he surveys her!—

“Clad all in white, that seems a virgin
best.

So well it her beseems, that ye would
ween

Some Angel she had been:
Her long loose yellow locks like golden
wire,

Sprinkled with pearl, and pearling flowers
atween,

Do like a golden mantle her attire;
And being crownèd with a garland green,
Seem like some maiden queen.”

And with what *naïf* pride he calls
on the “merchants’ daughters” to
say if they had ever seen “so fair
a creature in their town before”!

Bas. He gives them a very
minute catalogue of her charms,
if I remember right.

Geof. Yes; but he quickly goes
on to say—

“But if ye saw that which no eyes can
see,
The inward beauty of her lively spright,

Garnished with heavenly gifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight.

There dwells sweet love and constant chastity,
Unspotted faith, and comely womanhood,
Regard of honour, and mild modesty;
There virtue reigns as queen in royal throne,
And giveth laws alone.

Had ye once seen these her celestial treasures,
And unrevealed pleasures,
Then would ye wonder and her praises sing,
That all the woods should answer and your echo ring."

Then comes the happiest moment of all. The poet cries—

"Open the temple-gates unto my love,
Open them wide that she may enter in!"

and sees her come in "before th' Almighty's view," passing the garlanded pillars "with trembling steps and humble reverence," while the organ sounds and the choristers sing, and all is bliss untold.

"Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
And blesses her with his two happy hands,
How the red roses flush up in her cheeks
And the pure snow with goodly vermeil stain,

Like crimson dyed in grain."

The angels themselves forget their office for a moment to gaze on this noble work of God, this new Eve. But her sweet eyes remain "fastened on the ground" as her lover cries—

"Why blush ye, love, to give to me your hand,
The pledge of all our band?
Sing, ye sweet Angels, Alleluya sing,
That all the woods may answer and your echo ring!"

Bas. Thank you, Geoffrey. How fresh, how genuine it all is! What

memories it stirs in an old man's mind! We who have loved and lost can still hear it with pleasure as we recollect the hopes, yet to be fulfilled, which the priest's spousal benediction held for us. You who, as far as I know, have never loved, and who have certainly never lost.

Geof. (aside). How can he know that?

Bas. Will, I hope, make haste to woo and win a bride like Spenser's.

Geof. Can I find one among the "girls of the period"?

Hen. Then you never knew one in whom this enchanting ideal was realised?

Geof. Once, it may be, long, long ago; and if so, short-lived:—

"Ostendent terris *hanc* tantum fata, neque ultra
Esse sinent."

Bas. Does not part of Schiller's "Song of the Bell" treat of marriage? Not being a good German scholar, I know it best by Retzsch's illustrations.

Geof. Oh yes. His bells ring merrily on the day which is to change his romantic young pair of lovers into the sober plodding house-father and housewife, and he sighs as he reflects that

"Life's fairest day
Ends, alas! our life's sweet May."

Hen. What a beautiful "Song" it is! How well the changeful verse reflects the changes and chances of human life which it celebrates! I think, Geoffrey, you have translated it. I should like to hear your version of the funeral-bell.

Geof. That is one of the more hopeful parts of the undertaking. The rapid movements of the fire-bell, and one other passage of the "Lied," are very hard to reproduce in English. But I have not satisfied myself even with the slow,

measured paces of the lines you ask for. Here they are, however, as bad and as good as other people's, I suppose:—

"To holy earth's dark bosom bringing,
We trust the work our hands have made :
The sower there his seed has laid,
And hopes 'twill bless his sight, up-
springing

Abundant as the Lord shall aid.
But seeds, more precious far, entombing,
We hide with tears on earth's dark
breast,

And hope, for fairer morrow blooming,
To see them break their confined rest.

From the Church-tower

Sounds the Bell,

Sad and slow,

Its funeral knell,

Solemnly its mournful tolls attending
One whose wanderings now on earth have
ending."

Hen. Oh, I like that version very much!—What a lyric genius Schiller had! You do not rate him very highly as a dramatist, I suppose?

Geof. The portions of his dramas most deeply impressed on my memory are certainly the lyric portions.—Speaking of foreign odes reminds me that there is a question I want to put to our great Italian scholar. Which is the finest Italian Canzone?

Bas. Do you know Leopardi? Some of his odes I admire greatly; they have an antique severity of style. Dante's (to begin earlier) are hard to understand, and mystic. I fear I have not devoted enough time and attention to them to pronounce fitly on their merits. But Petrarch's are to me enchanting, and I wonder that they are so often overlooked in his wilderness of sonnets. There is a fine one of his to Glory. One still finer is that in which he addresses Rienzi, and conjures him by the shades of the Scipios, by the yet dearer memory of the buried apostles, to restore liberty to Rome. He tells him that on him are fixed

the hopes of those ancient walls which the world, as it remembers the great past, cannot but survey with love and fear—of the monuments of those mighty dead whose fame will last as long as the world itself, and who cry from the under-world, with hopes fired by his exaltation, "Our Rome shall yet be beautiful once more."—Some of the love-odes are worthy of high praise also. More than any of those addressed to the living Laura, I admire the Canzone in which her happy spirit appears, holding palm and laurel branches to console her mourning lover.

Geof. Ah! I remember that Canzone well. I have long delighted in it.

Bas. But perhaps most beautiful of all is that ode, the sentiments of which we, who hold with Nicaea as against Trent, are bound to disapprove. I mean Petrarch's last Canzone, addressed to the blessed Virgin. It is one of the richest, sweetest, most pathetic, and most musical of poems. No doubt it owes something to the magnificent invocation of her in the "Paradiso," which our own Chaucer copied; but the harmony and the pathos are Petrarch's own. I would repeat some of it to you; but Henry, who has outstripped me in German, has not yet, I think, learned Italian.

Hen. Translate it for me in some leisure moment.

Bas. I make no rash promises, young man.—And now, for a while, a truce to this talk of harmonies addressed to the ear. Let us gaze on the grand harmonies addressed by the Everlasting Artist to the eye. We have rounded the topmost crag, and the tarn lies before us.

Geof. (after a pause). Little gem! or large, I should say, to be all made of one pure unbroken sap-

phire, as she looks to-day: there she sleeps, calm and peaceful, forgetting the winter's cold, and the ice that bound her hard and fast a while ago.

Hen. There is a snowdrift to remind her of the past, high up under that projecting rock.

Bas. And hers is a grave beauty, even to-day, when all things are smiling. Her blue can never wear the bright celestial hue of the larger lake below, which she helps to feed. Her grim mountain guardians forbid that; for they always overshadow her, and cast the reflection of their dark-purple rocks across her clear waters.

Hen. I thought the uproarious merriment of her stream lower down told of severe restraint in earlier days. That brawling cascade below was very like a youth who had too suddenly become his own master.

Geof. I note with approval your sudden change of gender. You were too courteous to imagine such a thing as a young damsel breaking loose into strange escapades, on her emancipation from the rigid rule of a stern governess.

Bas. Sit down a moment here, where the sun makes the bank warm. Look at those rocks in their still majesty, cutting sharp into the deep-blue sky. We do not often see them so.

Geof. No. The whole thing is out of character, and has deranged my stock of epithets. You northerners are popularly supposed to dwell amidst ceaseless mists and rains.

Bas. We can do pretty well in that line, it must be owned, upon occasion. In the later summer, the season in which Cockney tourists do chiefly abound among us, it is pitiful to see how the mountain nymphs squirt at them, bedrench, bedraggle, and in all

ways torment them. But this is our dry season; and when it happens, as now, to be a hot season also for a week or ten days, you see how charming these self-same fickle mountain nymphs can be!

Geof. I am not sure that I am quite charmed with them. In the first place, they have reflected sunbeams upon me during my toil with a more than midsummer heat.

Hen. Who was it who exclaimed, "Sun, how I hate thy beams!"

Geof. I retract: I love them—especially now that we have finished climbing the hill. Then secondly, which is more serious, they have disordered my ideas of your scenery. I meant to call it Ossianic, vague, vaporous, misty, full of tremulous lights vanishing into glooms; and lo and behold! everything is as clear and defined as though I were in Italy,—more so probably at this early season.

Bas. I thought you knew us well enough to know that we are "everything by turns and nothing long." Be reassured; before the week is out you may be comforted by some hail-showers. Virgil says of his hapless queen, wearied of life—

"Tædet cœli convexa tueri;"

but we have never many days given us in which to weary of the blue vault. Wherefore, to gaze up into it as I am doing now, is to me unspeakably pleasant. Does it not seem clearer, purer, deeper, than it looked from below? and does it not roof over these high rocks, and mirror itself in this azure pavement, till it makes this solitary tarn into an exquisitely adorned chapel of that great cathedral of nature which is all around us? . . . You were right not to answer; for even as I spoke, the

anthem began, and with what a delightful solo voice! I can just descry the singer.

Hen. Let us apostrophise him with Shelley:—

“Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest,
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest;
And singing still dost soar, and soaring
ever singest.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven
is overflowed.”

Geof. Ah! that “Skylark” of Shelley’s is something like an ode. The man sings in emulation of the bird, ascending from one beautiful fancy to another, till at last (again like the lark) he drops suddenly out of the cloudless blue, and comes down to earth again, with the altered note:—

“We look before and after,
And pine for what is not.
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of
saddest thought.”

Bas. Shelley is no great favourite of mine. He generally seems to me, reversing a wise maxim, to “take care of the sounds, and let the sense take care of itself.”

Geof. Oh, but the “Skylark” is very good sense; besides possessing a liquid sweetness truly delightful to the ear.

Hen. There is not only sense, but very accurate meteorology, in “The Cloud.”

Bas. I will except these two; and, if you press me hard, perhaps half-a-dozen more. But at his best, Shelley aims at gratifying the ear more than the mind. He does not, like Wordsworth, enrich it with noble thoughts to be to it an everlasting gain. Look now at Wordsworth’s Ode (the finest our century

has produced) on the “Intimations of Immortality.” Its theory of the soul’s pre-existence may be a mistake, but it is an elevating belief even should it be ill-grounded; and it rests, at all events, on a truth of first-rate importance to man—his spirit’s divine origin and noble destiny. Wordsworth’s memories of his own childhood, when earth was unfamiliar and heaven seemed very near, confirmed him in this faith. He thankfully remembered

“those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings,
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts, before which our mortal
nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised!”

which bore witness to him that all in him was not of the earth, earthy; and looked back with reverent regret to the

“time when meadow, grove, and
stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.”

Standing on a spiritual elevation a little higher than our present physical one (you know you can see the sea from that hill above us, Geoffrey), he felt that

“in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither;
Can in a moment travel thither—
And see the children sport upon the
shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling ever-
more.”

Such thoughts as these elevate as well as please the mind. Nature is different to Wordsworth’s eye than to Shelley’s; because there is to him, behind her appearances, a nobler life of which she is the exponent. Accordingly, his moon *lives*, while Shelley’s only *shines*;

and yet, while possessing more than the other, he laments a loss. You remember :—

“It is not now as it has been of yore ;—

Turn wheresoe’er I may,

By night or day,

The things which I have seen I now can see no more !

The rainbow comes and goes,

And lovely is the rose ;

The moon doth with delight

Look round her when the heavens are bare ;

Waters on a starry night

Are beautiful and fair ;

The sunshine is a glorious birth ;

But yet I know, where’er I go,

That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.”

Or again, that magnificent stanza—

“Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :

The soul that rises with us, our life’s star,

Hath had elsewhere its setting,

And cometh from afar ;

Not in entire forgetfulness,

And not in utter nakedness,

But trailing clouds of glory do we come

From God, who is our home :

Heaven lies about us in our infancy !

Shades of the prison-house begin to close

Upon the growing boy,

But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,—

He sees it in his joy ;

The youth, who daily farther from the east

Must travel, still is Nature’s priest,

And by the vision splendid

Is on his way attended ;

At length the man perceives it die away,

And fade into the light of common day.”

Geof. It is a grand idea, as you say. Plato, from whom Wordsworth learned it, was indeed a poet. And how suitable the imagery which clothes it, all taken in the stanza you have last quoted from the highest and purest things man can see,—the light of heaven, the morning star, the clouds which mantle round the rising or setting sun ! By the way, have you seen Mr Myers’s little book on Wordsworth ? I think it is as creditable a piece of criticism as I have read for long.

Bas. I will read it on your recommendation.

Hen. I have been thinking of Geoffrey’s first words about odes ; and it strikes me that, from Horace downwards, they show a tendency to address themselves to a more and more limited audience. First, they are a nation’s expression of reverence for the gods, sung by a trained chorus, and, in due time, expanded into the tragedy of Hellas ; then they celebrate victories at games which reunite a whole widely scattered race ; then afterwards they come down to the service of kings and courts ; then, at last, they become the expression of an individual’s feelings in solitude. You cannot, for example, imagine Wordsworth chanting the ode you have been very properly admiring to any large assemblage of people ; though you may think you see him declaim it on a hillside, like our friend here, to one or two chosen listeners. Its subject is personal and philosophical.

Bas. You know that he composed odes on a subject which interested all England—the peace which Waterloo won for us. They were full of patriotism and piety ; but somehow the divine afflatus was wanting to them, and I could not repeat you a line of either of them.

Geof. Modern poets do not seem to have their feelings so well at command as the ancients. Sometimes the unpicturesque adjuncts of a great event deter them ; which same event, when it has passed into history, and gathered round it the softening haze supplied by distance, will have its fame sounded forth by the singers of another generation. Sometimes a smaller occurrence rouses into a blaze that poetic fervour which, in the presence of a greater one, unaccountably smoulders into ashes, or else

is blown clean out. Sir John Moore's death at Corunna is celebrated in lines,—humble, if you will, compared with the majesty of the Ode, but which, I think, will always be remembered. Nelson's at Trafalgar waits yet for a fitting poetic commemoration. In spite of all the efforts of the Scotts and the Southey's, our great Duke received no tribute of verse, whether ode or otherwise, which will go down to posterity, till Tennyson (in the nursery when Waterloo was fought) bade his grateful country

"In the vast cathedral leave him :
God accept him, Christ receive him."

Bas. I rather doubt that ode's surviving to any remote generation.

Hen. But you have forgotten the fine stanzas on Waterloo in "Childe Harold."

Geof. Wellington is not named in them. It might have been a crushing defeat for anything Byron says about it, or about him. "Brunswick's fated chieftain" is the only warrior he condescends to commemorate. Then even Napoleon, whose career was so peculiarly fascinating to the imagination,—

"Who threw for empire, and his stakes
were thrones,
His tables earth, his dice were human
bones,"—

whose successes and reverses were alike on such a gigantic scale, inspired no very fine ode. Byron's is scarcely generous to a fallen foe, although it is just. France, enlightened by writers like Lanfrey and Madame de Remusat, will not now dissent from the judgment—

"With might unquestioned—power to
save—

Thine only gift hath been the grave
To those that worshipped thee ;
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness."

But pity should not be scornful,

as Byron's is when he speaks of

"The triumph and the vanity,
The rapture of the strife—
The earthquake voice of Victory,
To thee the breath of life ;
The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
Which man seemed made but to obey,
Wherewith renown was rife—
All quelled ! Dark spirit ! what must be
The madness of thy memory !

The Desolator desolate !
The Victor overthrown !
The Arbitrer of others' fate
A suppliant for his own !"

Bas. Manzoni's "Cinque Maggio" is a much finer ode than Byron's. But both the English and the Italian poet must have felt that, great as were the talents of Napoleon, his character was a little one, and that the nation which he deceived so long was worthier of pity than he.

Geof. Coleridge had a grander subject in his "France,"—that fine wail over the fall of a nation which had seemed the chosen standard-bearer of the human race ; for after all, France betrayed herself before Napoleon betrayed her. It is remarkable, too, as a prediction ; for assuredly it is not merely with a master's hand, but with "a prophet's fire," that he "strikes the deep sorrows of his lyre," when he sings, at the opening of 1797, in his indignation at the French conquest of Switzerland, how the men who have dared

"To insult the shrine of Liberty with
spoils
From freemen torn"

are themselves destined by a just retribution to

"Wear the name
Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain."

No doubt his hopes of France had been unreasonable ; but his entertaining them was a generous error, and their disappointment was most cruel.

Bas. He owns, though, if you

remember, that, almost from the first, with those hopes grave fears were blended. How finely he expresses them both !—

“‘And what,’ I said, ‘though Blasphemy’s loud scream

With that sweet music of deliverance strove !

Though all the fierce and drunken passions wove

A dance more wild than e’er was maniac’s dream !

Ye storms that round the dawning east assembled,

The Sun was rising, though ye hid his light ;

And when, to soothe my soul, that hoped and trembled,

The dissonance ceased, and all seemed calm and bright ;

When France, her front deep - scarred and gory,

Concealed with clustering wreaths of glory ;

When, insupportably advancing,

Her arm made mockery of the warrior’s tramp,

While, timid looks of fury glancing, Domestic treason, crushed beneath her fatal stamp,

Writhed like a wounded dragon in his gore,

Then I reproached my fears that would not flee.”

Geof. Is not that a fine image of the stormy sunrise? And is not that picture of Gallia victrix majestic?

Hen. What a shame, though, to call the loyalty of La Vendée “domestic treason” !

Bas. Shall I say you the opening of the ode? It contains the secret of the poet’s disappointment. He had studied freedom, not amidst men, but among the clouds and waves. Now their liberty is a freedom to obey their Maker’s laws,—that which man seeks is too often the liberty to break them, on which abuse of freedom punishment surely follows. But it is an invocation, beautiful as are the words of the Greek heroine, who, like Coleridge, in all her protests against human tyranny, remained faithful to the “eternal laws.”

“Ye clouds that far above me float and pause,

Whose pathless march no mortal may control !

Ye ocean-waves, that wheresoe’er ye roll,

Yield homage only to eternal laws !

Ye woods, that listen to the night-birds singing,

Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,

Save when your own imperious branches, swinging,

Have made a solemn music of the wind !

Where, like a man beloved of God, Through glooms which never woodman trod,

How oft, pursuing fancies holy, My moonlight way o’er flowering weeds I wound,

Inspired beyond the guess of folly By each rude shape, and wild unconquerable sound !

O ye loud waves ! and O ye forests high !

And O ye clouds that far above me soared !

Thou rising sun, thou blue rejoicing sky !

Yea, everything that is and will be free !

Bear witness for me, wheresoe’er ye be, With what deep worship I have still adored

The spirit of divinest Liberty.”

Hen. Thank you, oh, so much ! That is beautiful ! Now, is it Coleridge’s grief, do you think, at having misunderstood these sublime teachings of Nature, which breathes in his later “Ode to Dejection” ? where he speaks of himself as gazing with a blank eye on

“those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,

That give away their motion to the stars ; Yon crescent moon, as fixed as if it grew

In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue ; I see them all so excellently fair ;

I see, not feel, how beautiful they are ;”

and exclaims mournfully—

“We receive but what we give, And in our life alone does nature live ; Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud !

And would we ought behold, of higher worth,

Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue
forth,

A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the earth."

I want to know whether that beautifully expressed thought is a just one? or is it merely the fancy of a depressed imagination?

Geof. Coleridge seems here to state one side of the truth; but, as Berkeley does, over-strongly. The mind that perceives, receives those impressions from the object perceived, and those only, which it is at that time capable of receiving. Nature, therefore, speaks of freedom to the aspiring spirit, while to the willing slave her voice is dumb; and moves man's heart most powerfully when she coincides with his joy and sorrow; when she shines on the bridal, and drops tears over our dead. Those poets who, like Tennyson, for example, delight to exhibit her in such harmony with our moods, are said to use the "pathetic fallacy;" for, as we all know, Nature can sing when we sorrow, and mourn when our hearts feel glad.

Bas. I should be inclined, with Wordsworth, and Coleridge himself when fittest to pronounce, to say that we receive far more than we give. Whose moods of sadness have not been charmed away by Nature's joy—nay, even when it is a joy that we cannot share? When, for instance, the carols of the birds, and the bright sunshine outside, only make the darkness and silence of the death-chamber the more awful, do they not bear witness to us of the presence of One greater than ourselves, who leads through night into day? It is in proportion as we learn to discern Him that the "celestial light," of which even Wordsworth had to mourn the fading away with youth,

comes back to clothe His works; even as the lost star came back to the gaze of the Eastern sages, when they left Jerusalem for Bethlehem.

There is a third ode by Coleridge which you have neither of you mentioned—that to "The Departing Year." Do not you, Geoffrey, perceive in it much of that lyrical exaltation, that force and fury, which you set out by bespeaking as chief characteristics of the odes?

Geof. Yes; but it is unequal in its parts,—not such a sustained exhibition of power as "France."

Hen. My complaint of it would be like the Scotchman's of the instructive reading which he found in Johnson's Dictionary, that it is "rather disconnected." I could not have found my way through it without the help of its preface.

Bas. Does not that make it the more Pindaric?—But, to speak seriously, you are both right; still it has some fine passages—the earth-spirit's accusation of England, the wicked empress "stunned by death's twice mortal mace," and the poet's own state after seeing the dread vision.

Geof. How sad was the premature old age which so early closed all that brilliant promise, and allowed Coleridge but a fitful use of what he calls his birth-gift, his "shaping spirit of Imagination"! "Kublai Khan" remains a fragment; "Christabel" is "left half told," to be completed, in a spirit of cheerful ignorance, *proh pudor!* by Martin Tupper; and Trafalgar and Waterloo were not sung by perhaps the greatest poetic genius then in England.

Hen. I should like to know—when so much might have been done which was not done by that brilliant constellation of poets then the honour of our country—which you two consider to be the best ode which our great war with

Napoleon succeeded in inspiring any one of them with.

Bas. I do not know whether Geoffrey will agree with me; but I should say the "Battle of the Baltic." Campbell's "Hohenlinden," and "Mariners of England"—each first-rate of its sort—are rather on a lower line, and scarcely rise to the dignity of the ode; but, in my judgment, his "Battle of the Baltic," though not pretending to the varied harmonies which odes modelled after the great antique patterns afford us, has a majesty of its own which entitles it to the rank of an ode. Its stanzas are, indeed, of unequal merit; but they all, except the last, avoid false ornament, and, dealing sparingly in metaphor, forcibly present to us the poetic aspects of a sea-fight,—its power to wrap the heavens in darkness—its thunders outbellowing the artillery of the skies—its lightnings more harmful than those of the clouds,—and in language awful from its very simplicity. As is, or rather was, Turner's picture of the fighting *Téméraire* in painting, such is this ode in poetry—an irresistible appeal to those strong fighting instincts which every man is born with; which we, like our Viking ancestors, behold in the sea the most fitting field for; and which, properly directed, are an inestimable possession. The sorrow, the indescribable pathos, of Turner's picture arises from the fact that the gallant ship is to fight no more. Campbell's poem makes us rejoice over our "hearts of oak" as if they were living things, and could themselves enjoy their triumph. Everything now around us (except the month of the year, which happens to be the same) is as different from the scene of which Campbell writes as possible. Our downward path has once more brought the lake into view sleeping peacefully below us,

its farther shore illumined by the sun, now low in the sky. The tinkle of a sheep-bell is the loudest sound we hear, as it plays an accompaniment to the murmur of the brook. But as I say the words,—

"It was ten of April morn by the chime:

As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death,
And the boldest held his breath
For a time,"—

I seem to see the Northern billows, and the ships confronting each other in line of battle, and the descendants of the old sea-adventurers met once more, forgetful of their common descent, for mortal combat. How does it go on?

"'Hearts of oak!' our captains cried;
when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom;
Then cease—and all is wail,
As they strike the shattered sail,
Or in conflagration pale
Light the gloom."

Then comes the surrender, and how

"Denmark blessed our chief
That he gave her wounds repose;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildly rose,
As Death withdrew his shades from the day:
While the sun looked smiling bright
O'er a wide and woful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away."

And then how well the ode concludes with a lament over the gallant men who died in the hour of victory, and whose resting-place recalls the memory of that best-beloved of Danes to an Englishman, Hamlet!—

"Now joy, Old England, raise!
For the tidings of thy might,

By the festal cities' blaze,
While the wine-cup shines in light ;
And yet, amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore !"

Hen. Will you not say us the last stanza ?

Bas. I think it better omitted. I am not very fond of its "condoling mermaid."

Geof. How pleasantly the English respect for a brave adversary comes out in that poem ! The Danes cheer as we do, heartily and undauntedly ; only with weaker sound as their numbers diminish.

Hen. (to Basil). You were right : one does seem to see it all,—the preternatural darkness only lighted by the burning ships, and the sad sights on which the sun slowly looks forth once more.—Now, will you kindly explain to me why you, a learned and peaceful person, can take pleasure in visions of carnage like those you have been calling up before us ? and why Geoffrey, a man of letters, and I, who am not even member of a rifle-corps, both alike partook of what, I fear, I must call the unhallowed excitement ?

Geof. Let me at least show that there is nothing strange or unwonted in the phenomenon, by the example of one whom I have only lately learned to love,—the Laureate's brother, the late Charles Tenyson Turner.

Bas. Ah ! I am anxious to read his sonnets.

Hen. Remembering a certain conversation last summer, I cannot but think you will consider them as highly irregular,—in fact, unfit to be called *sonnets* at all ; and I am surprised at Geoffrey's admiring them, for, if I remember right, he contended the more strenuously of the two for correctness of form.

Bas. Are they more un-Petrarchan than Shakespeare's ?

Geof. No ; and they justify themselves often, which is the main point, by their own beauty. His first little volume was, if I am any judge, by far the best, though nearly all his sonnets are worth reading ; and one of those early sonnets, written while at college, by one of the gentlest and most amiable of men, may supply some answer to Henry's question. It is called "Martial Ardour in Age." That I can repeat it to you will show how much it has impressed me. It runs thus :—

"Oh ! if ye marvel that mine eye doth glow,
Now every pulse of fervid youth is lost,
Ye never heard the kingly trumpets blow,
Nor felt the fieldward stirring of a host ;
Nor how the bayonet assures the hand
That it can never fail, while Death doth stand,
Amid the thunders of the reckless drum
And the loud scorn of fifes, ashamed and dumb !
Nor, when the noble revel dies away,
How proud they lie upon the stained mould,
A presence too majestic to gainsay,
Of lordly martial bearing mute and cold,
Which Honour knows o' th' instant ! such
as lay
On Morat late, or Marathon of old !"

Hen. It seems odd to speak of the battle of Morat as a recent occurrence. It was fought in the fifteenth century, was it not ? Is there no newer battle that could take its place ?

Geof. The alliteration must be preserved, and the fight must be one fought for a country's liberty and independence ; so that limits the choice. I should be inclined for some alteration like—

"On Morat's sod, or Marathon's of old !"

Hen. Then, too, does not the first line need explaining ? We are not told what the eye glows at.

Should not "at war" be added in the second line, omitting "fervid"?

Geof. Possibly: the following lines, however, abundantly suggest it.

Bas. I am rather ashamed of you both with your minute criticisms. Have you not a word of admiration for that fine poetic representation of the undoubted fact that even the constitutionally timid cease to fear when once engaged in a hand-to-hand combat? The hand assured by the bayonet, Death's ashamed silence amid the martial music, Honour owning the bravely fallen, are all splendid. What soldier seasoned in a hundred fights could describe the enthusiasm of conflict more justly than this quiet student has done? — But to answer your question, Henry. It is not the bloodshed and slaughter, but the endurance, the courage, the power to overcome, which delight the mind in warlike poetry. Most of all, it is the evidence of an assured belief in man's immortality supplied by the fact that wise and good men in all ages have thought that there were causes in defence

of which man's earthly life should be cheerfully laid down, that refreshes and uplifts the spirit. You, in the calling that awaits you, we in those we are pursuing, have each of us to fight—though our enemies may not be so easy to see, or so quickly to be overcome, as those our brother-soldier goes to meet. You remember the words of that generous prince, Fortinbras, over the dead Hamlet, decreeing him those military honours which he never had the opportunity to earn:—

"Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage,
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally; and, for
his passage,
The soldier's music and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him."

May you two be able to have some such thoughts as those about your old friend; when the bells, which will soon be summoning us from that grey church-tower in the dale to the Easter Tuesday evening service, toll slowly in his honour, and he is carried, off his last battlefield, to take a long rest in its shelter!

THE SECOND STAGE OF THE LAND BILL.

WHEN, after a long and unexplained reticence, Mr Gladstone, on the 16th of May, made a speech containing suggestions for a more accurate interpretation of the clauses of the Land Bill now before Parliament, he remarked as follows :—

“I have never known a case in which so large a measure, debated for such a length of time, has had so few of its points brought into serious discussion.”

The answer which suggested itself to hundreds, nay thousands of minds, on hearing or reading these words, doubtless was, “We were, on and from the night when the second reading of the Bill was proposed, most anxious for the serious discussion of these ‘points’; but we did not understand many of them, and you persistently refused to give us light, though we besought you to do so. Our difficulties were, at the commencement of the debate, clearly stated by an able advocate, to whom as yet you have given no answer. We *could* not therefore engage in the serious discussion, abstention from which has been so much at variance with your previous experience.” That is the obvious, and it is quite a sufficient answer. On reflection, however, we are inclined to believe that want of explanation alone might not have been effectual in suppressing discussion of the points of the Bill, had those points been the objects on which the public regard most readily fastened. The more we think the more we are convinced that, though the obscurity of the points may have seemed to each man’s mind a good reason for declining to deal with them, yet that there was a deep-lying consideration, very potent with

most, inducing them to turn away from particulars, and to study the remarkable general features of the measure. If Mr Gladstone will think again, his astonishment may abate; for he will perceive that a broad view of his Bill has given ample occupation even to minds that are not easily startled; and that, until this shall have become somewhat familiar by time, there will be small disposition to haggle over details.

Ministers and their friends would have the country believe that Parliament is engaged in studying and maturing a generous, even-handed, generally desired, and at the same time moderate, project for eliminating anomalies, adjusting differences of opinion and of practice, and restoring harmony, in all dealings connected with the letting and hiring of land in Ireland. But surely there never was a more monstrous representation than this. The Government has never been called upon by two well-meaning parties, who could not between them arrange their little differences, to arbitrate and to suggest a *modus vivendi*, as Lord Hartington called it. The Government cannot, dare not, vaunt itself as the common friend, the impartial umpire, in whose dispassionate goodwill both sides have faith, and by whose honest verdict both sides are prepared to abide. Not at all. The Government has been terrified into its action in this matter by rebellion, assassination, and outrage. It has taken up the question in the interest of the blood-stained and the lawless. It has never been asked to legislate by the other side. It aims at purchasing from the unruly, whom it knows not how to

govern, a few years' quiet at the expense of others whose obedience to the laws can be depended upon, and who therefore, in the eyes of cowardly and unrighteous rulers, offer a tempting means of soothing the disaffected.

The conduct of the Government towards Ireland and towards the Transvaal is of a piece; the actions in the two widely distant parts of the world explain each other. Open resistance to law is what secures its miserable partisanship. The crack of a rifle is that which carries conviction to it and makes it insensible to every consideration of right and equity—to every cry from the oppressed, to every argument from the dispossessed, provided only that the oppressed and the dispossessed are not likely to support their remonstrances by physical force.

When the Apostle wrote that rulers are not a terror to the good but to the evil doers, and that they who would not fear the power, have but to do good and they shall have praise of the same, he must have had in his mind rulers as they ought to be; our own experience shows us that rulers sometimes can, and do, reverse the character which he has ascribed to them. For to whom are our rulers a terror? To evil-doers? Assuredly not. Rebels, murderers, the workers of violence, the perpetrators of cruelties, find in the Government their devoted advocates, the instruments for giving them their hearts' desires. It is the law-abiding, the inoffensive, the obedient, to whom these rulers, by their omissions or their acts, are a terror. This is not exaggeration. In Ireland our Government is literally a terror to all who possess property, or who wish to live in peace. It does not uphold the law, it does not protect the inoffensive subject of the Crown, it does not suppress sedition and rebellion; it is there

feared by all who have anything to lose, and the shadow of the same fear probably sits darkling on the mind of many a property-holder in Great Britain.

Those who come to the law, or to the makers of law, for redress or help, should in common decency submit to the law. Those who have the making of laws are bound to insist on submission and loyalty in those who cry to them before they lend an ear to the complaints. How stands the case between our rulers and the disaffected in Ireland? We all know.

The above remarks may be summed in a sentence. The Land Bill is a *one-sided measure*. Unfairness is the strongest feature in it. The critical public are shocked and arrested by this great blot, and have but little desire to examine the "points" of that which so offends them as a whole.

It is not, however, the sense of justice alone which is offended by the Bill: the measure is repugnant to our common-sense. The prominent reason given for the invention of it is that an Irishman, when seeking the position of tenant of another man's land, becomes *ipso facto* blind to his own interests, incapable of making a bargain to his own advantage, and so helpless a being in the hands of the designing landlord, that the State must, for equity's sake, step in to his assistance, and pronounce every contract for that purpose void, until it shall have received the approval of a court of law charged to examine and to regulate such matters. This most curious doctrine, which is the foundation of the proposed law, has been allowed, so far, to pass over the field of review with far less remark than its effrontery deserves.

Such is its improbability, its inconsistency, with all experience, such is the demand which it makes

on our credulity, that, in the absence of an acknowledged paternity, we should be disposed to father it on an Irishman. Unless a plan should be started to afford State fostering to the "smart" men in the rings at New York, we can scarcely conceive one so preposterous as this. When it suits the purpose of the advocates of the Bill (as it often does) to cry up the qualities of the Irishman, he is credited with immense shrewdness, and every one who has any acquaintance with him will admit that the ascription is just. Change the object of the argument, and you may be called upon to believe that this same astute Irishman is only on a par with infants, lunatics, and imbeciles! He is capable, as we know, of over-riding the laws, and of setting up and maintaining, under the very eyes of the constituted authorities, an unlawful conspiracy for the enforcement of tyrannical edicts. He has formed, and he avows, the purpose of driving the landlords off the soil and of seizing their property, yet he is too simple and innocent to be allowed to bargain with a landlord. How do all these things agree? The demand for land in Ireland is far in excess of the supply, *therefore*, as say the authors of the Bill, the Irishman must not be allowed on his own judgment to make a contract concerning rent. Accurate reasoners would say that the conclusion was a *non sequitur* of the first statement. Here again the Bill is, in its very essence, fit to repel confidence and to turn away consideration from its "points."

If the Ministerial project be remarkable for the things to be found in it, it is no less so for what it wants. Whether it be reasonable or unreasonable, just or unjust, we are assured that it is necessary for the peace of the nation and for the well-being of society. Whatever

may be the objections to such a measure when regarded in the abstract, they must give way on the ground that it is required for the general good. For the common advantage of all, a law must be made whereby some part of the property of a certain class of the community is to be taken from that class and handed over to another class. Supposing, for the sake of argument, that the necessity does exist, then the State, which makes the forcible transfer of goods, is manifestly bound to make good to those who may be despoiled the value of their loss. Even the husband of Jezebel, whose notions of equity do not appear to have been over-refined, was willing to give Naboth another vineyard in exchange for that which he coveted, or else the worth of it in money. Will Britain show herself to be less advanced than Jezreel? The passing of a law by which property can be reft from the lawful owners without adequate compensation being awarded, is revolution—nothing less.

Now, although the rebels and Land-Leaguers in Ireland certainly do proclaim that they desire to seize the land—not simply to benefit themselves, but by way of vengeance and retribution on the landlords, for having dared to be landlords—yet the Government is careful to repudiate everything like a feeling of hostility towards the landlords. It is very anxious, no doubt, to buy off the rebellious disposition of the tenants with some of the landlords' property; but it may do this without incurring a worse charge than that of foolish paltering with insurrection, if it resolve to make good from the public purse that which it deems it necessary to take from the owners. If necessity will justify the passing of the Bill at all, it will also justify the furnishing of compensation from

the funds of the State. The omission of all mention of compensation for alienated property is a grievous objection to the Bill, and will have its share in holding back attention from the separate provisions. Those who have looked at the whole scheme must have perceived, as we do, that, as it now stands, it is revolutionary. They will surely use their endeavours to cleanse it of this opprobrium. They will trust that, if the Commons should be so misguided as not to provide the proper compensation, the Lords will refuse to pass the measure until the omission shall have been supplied. If the Prime Minister will not take back his Bill with compensation clauses added, let the responsibility of abandoning it rest on *him*.

We are aware that it has been sophistically attempted of late to show that it is not intended to take anything from the landlords, and that, therefore, they can have no claim to compensation. The fallacy has been completely exposed, and it is unnecessary for us to repeat here the arguments and illustrations by which it has been brought to nought. There is, however, a broad, but at the same time simple, view of the question, which is much in the public eye just now, and it is this: The Irish tenant is exceedingly anxious to get some right or rights of the landlord which the latter is equally unwilling to part with. This right (whatever it may amount to) is valuable in the eyes of both. The framers of the Bill think it of value because they seek to make a law for the purpose of transferring it. Clearly, then, it is valuable, and it probably means a pecuniary sum. If, however, it should mean only rights or privileges not ordinarily expressed in money value, still the value can be assessed. Or even say that its value is (what we by no means believe) sentimental only, Mr Glad-

stone's Government is not one which can afford to depreciate even sentimental rights. In brief, something which is now his is to be taken from the landlord for the public convenience, and he is entitled to compensation from the public for his loss.

Mr Gladstone has said something more than that the landlord will not, by the operation of the Bill, suffer loss, and that, therefore, he has no claim to compensation. Mr Gladstone has actually said the landlord will be a gainer, inasmuch as the effect of the Bill will be to increase the value of land. It was a bold saying. What we see around us tends to a directly opposite conclusion. The violence of the Land League, the unwillingness of the Government to protect the peaceable, the manifest disposition to bear hardly on the landlord as regards his rent, cannot but depreciate land. It is but small comfort to those who have to prepare for absolute ruin, or something very like it, to be told that, in Mr Gladstone's opinion, their land will soon be more valuable! Mr Gladstone must be pretty nearly alone in this belief.

The remark has been frequently made, and we only echo it as a thing to be kept in view, that Mr Gladstone, though he pretended to define tenant-right, and to say wherein it consisted, failed utterly to explain what it is.

It cannot but have been generally observed how languidly the Land Bill has been piloted in the House of Commons by ministers, how slow they have been to speak on it, how they have allowed night after night to be wasted in the discussion of less important subjects, how they have failed to avoid countings-out at early hours, how they have seemed to shun rather than to seek a vote of the House. This half-hearted conduct has not hither-

to been a characteristic of Mr Gladstone, and it must be significant of some important peculiarity in the position of the Government. The readiest guess to account for their apparent *nonchalance* is, that the great Liberal party, perhaps the Cabinet itself, may not be exactly unanimous in the views entertained concerning these broad features of the Bill. This suspicion is supported by the recent defection of the Duke of Argyll from Mr Gladstone's councils. It is not unreasonable to suppose that considerations which pushed him to the extreme of resignation, may be operating, although not to the extent of open schism, on other members of the Ministry, and members of the House. Only one camel's back has fairly given way; but there may be many backs which are within "the estimation of a hair" of being fractured. If it be true that there is a grievous strain on many Liberal consciences, and that legislators are craving relief, some in this direction, some in that, then it is easily intelligible why there has been no very brisk desire for getting the measure into Committee. The divisions in Committee will test pretty severely the bonds of party.

One cannot think without shame and sorrow of the course which the members of the old Whig party are following. There are men bearing illustrious names, men by position allied with the great institutions of the country, who cannot in their hearts desire the subversion of law, the abolition of property, or impunity for crime, yet who allow themselves to be dragged along in the progress of the Radical multitude. They know as well as we do the danger of tampering with crime, of buying order, of loosening the bonds of society, yet they have not enough of public virtue, perhaps not sufficient strength of mind, to take the right course, when by

doing so they may damage party interests. Radicals are thought to be of such narrow perception that they can regard only one small section of a public question; but this excuse cannot be made for Whigs. They know well enough what it is that they are doing. They must feel to-day how unpatriotic their conduct is; they will feel hereafter how bitterly they must expiate their weakness and folly.

It has been hinted that the shame of being deserted on this Irish question by the Irish members disinclined Ministerialists to bring about a division; and that the delays were incurred in order that Mr Parnell and his *confrères* might be brought into a more favourable frame of mind. Certainly an Irish Relief Bill, which the Irish members might not recognise, would be in a somewhat forlorn condition. But whether or not they countenance his legislation, Mr Gladstone may rest assured that the Irish do not mean to discontinue their agitation in consequence of it. Their voices, heard from day to day, are still for war. The encouragement which their insubordination has already received has been much too flattering to allow of their ceasing to agitate. As one of the leaders said lately, their appetites have only been whetted by the success which has attended their efforts. What will be the next *douceur* offered to them, and at whose expense? are now becoming interesting questions. And, in reference to this mention of their appetites, what a perverse invention it must have been that could dignify their cupidity for what is not theirs by the name *earth-hunger*! It is easy enough thus to veil crime by finding some strange name for it. We may, as Lord Salisbury hinted, call the burglar's fancy *plate-hunger*, or the murderer's *life-hunger*—but is it right thus to try

to avert the odium which ought to attach to criminal desires? *

When the debate on the second reading of the Land Bill had been dragging on for about a fortnight, Mr Bright, on the 7th May, in reference to a speech of Mr Callan who had called attention to the condition of the Irish labourer, delivered himself of some remarks which must greatly have astonished all those who believed him to be a thorough supporter of the method of pacifying Ireland by throwing sops to the Land League. The subject afforded the right honourable gentleman an opportunity of being eloquent against the oppressive landlords, and of showing his sympathy with the down-trodden Irish peasant—of giving expression to a gush of cheap generosity, and of lending a push, by a side wind, to the Ministerial Bill. But he did not so use the occasion. He seemed to rejoice at being free from official fetters while dealing with a subject so closely related to the Cabinet measure that every word which fell from him must of necessity have been applied by his hearers to those whom the measure will affect. He spoke as one who, having been long compelled to breathe deceit and hypocrisy, at length for a moment found himself free and in pure air. His speech affords an argument against the Ministerial policy, as telling (because proceeding from Ministerial lips) as anything that has been uttered since the last phase of Irish discontent was adopted as a theme by Liberal statesmen.

Of a sudden Mr Bright appeared to be absolved from his fealty to the three F's, to the expropriation

of landlords, to the protection of the innocent tenant, to one-sided legislation. He spoke out plain and important truths concerning the Irish peasant. He laid bare the unworthy puppet which has been bedizened with so much sentimental frippery, and made a foremost figure of the day. In short, he spoke of the state of Ireland in the language of common-sense.

The Irish peasant, in Mr Bright's opinion, though undoubtedly poor, is by no means the poorest of the poor. He is poor because he has not, and because those about him have not, the energy and the enterprise which induce men of most other nations to improve their condition by industry of some kind. The natural forces of Ireland are capable of immense development, especially its water-power, which might keep hundreds of mills in activity. But these are suffered to run to waste; no man attempts to utilise them; and we have the sad spectacle of a nation of paupers where there might be a productive and sleek population. Of what use would it be, or would it be kind to the peasant, to multiply for his sake, and to place him and his fellows in, miserable potato-patches, the produce of which would barely keep soul and body together in the best of seasons, and in bad seasons could not keep the wolf from the door—which would only confirm him in passive endurance of his unambitious and unprofitable way of life? Of what avail to attempt the improvement of such a being by legislative means, when the real cause of the evil is in the man himself and in his race, in unthrift, in almost unrestrained squalor and

* We are quite willing to believe that in adopting this term Mr Gladstone intended it to apply solely to a great desire to make a living by means of the land in preference to any other means. But the evil eye which the Land-Leaguers have cast on the property of others, and the outrageous intentions which are avowed, and deeds which are executed, regarding land, make it difficult to see in the "earth-hunger" only an innocent desire.

degradation, in ignorance, envyings, and turbulence? Why do not capitalists force their way into this Sahara, as they have done into other districts within the last half-century, and why do they not transform the people in spite of themselves? He went on to say:—

“When I first went into Ireland everybody said that if a man had £100 a-year he thought it necessary to keep a jaunting-car, and that there was the least possible disposition to trade and industry; and everywhere I went I found that there was not a mother who was not expecting a son to get into the constabulary, or the excise, or the customs—or to obtain some other Government appointment. There seemed to be none of that anxiety to begin business, to carry on business, and to succeed in business, which is universal among all the middle-class families of Great Britain. I do not know how it is.”

We entirely coincide with Mr Bright. We are persuaded, as he appears to be, that the amelioration of the lot of Irish peasants is not to be achieved by legislation, and that potato plots are more likely to be a bane to them than a blessing. Our puzzle is that Mr Bright, holding such just opinions with regard to the peasant, should maintain directly opposite doctrines with respect to the small tenants. Why should legislative nursing, which is so bad for the labourer, be such a panacea for the tenant? The latter is equally likely to settle down into an attitude of thriftless indifference on his small farm, and to cry out to the State to aid him when he ought to be aiding himself. Activity and enterprise are of as much importance to him as to the labourer. Indeed, Mr Bright's whole speech was, by implication, a condemnation of the Irish policy of the Government of which he is a member.

It would almost seem as if his true and excellent convictions had

only very recently come to Mr Bright—perhaps since he set himself to work practically to rule Ireland on Liberal principles; for although he has mastered the main difficulties of the case, he has not found the solution of them; he has only discovered what will *not* solve them—namely, legislative meddling. The questions which, with exclamatory fervour, he put to all the world, “Why do not the middle-classes encourage industry? Why do not capitalists come forward? Why is there no energy, no enterprise?” can be answered only too readily by those who have been longer accustomed to look with an impartial eye on Ireland's difficulties. As to why capital cannot find its way to Ireland—first, there is in Ireland no security for capital, for the capitalist, or for his servants and gear. The people are turbulent, impulsive, and deadly. The laws are insufficient to protect property or to protect inoffensive and industrious inhabitants from violence. When the laws are made for a time more stringent, there is always the expectation that they will be speedily and unwisely relaxed; and the uncertainty of the duration of the law operates as a bar to the introduction of capital. For no capitalist will put his money into an enterprise, the property of which may in any session of Parliament be left exposed to the attacks of mobs and banditti. If Mr Bright would encourage the migration of capital to Ireland, he should, in the first place, take steps for affording protection to property over an extended period. The capitalist then might have some reasonable hope of deriving future profit from present outlay.

In the second place, the principles of legislation which Mr Bright and his friends advocate, cannot but have the effect of scaring capital away from the land where they operate. Landlords

are capitalists. The cry of the disaffected in Ireland is, "Away with the landlords!" and the action of the Government is to mulct the landlords of their lawful property for the advantage of the tenants. This is not the way to encourage the introduction of capital for any purpose. Capitalists, who see the way in which landlords are being treated, have prophetic souls, and know that what is being perpetrated against landlords to-day may be perpetrated against themselves a year hence.

If Mr Bright will but lay to heart the truth which he has discovered—to wit, that capital must be attracted to Ireland before the island can prosper, he will speedily perceive that a total reversal of the policy now in vogue with his party must take place. Capital is a delicate plant, and will not take root in a soil where it is subject to rude handling.

Unfortunately, Mr Bright, when he spoke again in the House of Commons on May 9th, seemed to have quite forgotten his sentiments uttered on the 7th, and was now turned into the strong advocate of the Land Bill, with all its injustice, and all the poverty, absence of industry, and discontent with which it threatens Ireland. He said then :—

"This is a great and solemn question which is brought before us; we must go forward or we must go backward, as the honourable and learned gentleman proposes. Going back means that you are to govern Ireland with the constabulary and a great army, that you will be driven by-and-by to suspend trial by jury, to put an end to freedom of the press, and to suppress public meetings. This is the course which the honourable and learned gentleman asks the House to take. I am against all that. I believe we must go on in the direction which we are now endeavouring to pursue."

He spoke as if the Land Bill were an alternative measure to the coer-

cive laws at which he hinted. We venture to say that he is mistaken. Whether the Bill becomes law, or whether it does not, some such coercion as he described, and probably more than that, will have to be enacted within a short time, if we are to retain Ireland at all. It is amazing to find a man with Mr Bright's vigorous brain standing up and vaunting this poor Bill as likely to produce peace. As if it were not entirely antagonistic to the principles which he had announced two days before! As if we had not had repeatedly before nostrums pressed upon us with the assurance that they would cure all the ills of Ireland!

We not only know that former nostrums have failed utterly, and made things worse than they found them; but, as if to remove all doubt as to the expected effects of the Bill, the Land League continue to assure us now, while the measure is under consideration, that it will by no means satisfy them, and that they will continue, either with or without it, to offer to the Government the resistance which they know so well how to organise. Whether the Bill may stand or fall, we say there will be coercion more severe than that which is now lawful.

We were glad to observe that throughout the debate on the second reading there was an approval of the provision for emigration, and that many speakers expressed regret that this subject did not occupy a more important place. If the number of persons who insist on living by the land, and who will not resort to any other way of living while they remain at home, be more than the land can support, it is manifestly wise to thin the population. And until we read Mr Bright's speech of 7th May we were of opinion that the creation of small proprietors might possibly

be wise. That right honourable gentleman has, however, so clearly shown the numbing effect which may be produced by the possession of a small holding, that we feel rather shaken in our opinion.

Adverting to what is written above—namely, that coercion more severe than this generation has experience of, will have ere long to be resorted to in Ireland—we add now that probably the burden of enacting the repressive laws will be thrown upon the Conservative party, after the system of *douceurs* shall have utterly failed. We trust that, in dealing with the Bill before us, our friends will not lose sight of this probability, or allow their enemies to charge them for a moment with having, in ill-humour, in haste, or in a flow of party warmth, rejected a measure which had in it anything likely to bring real benefit to Ireland. And when the time shall come—as come it must—for curing the blunders of the present Government, and for putting down anarchy by the strong arm, they will be able to proceed *sans peur et sans reproche* to deal with the evils which will be their sad inheritance—which they never created, and the creation of which they would have prevented if they could.

Mr Gladstone threatened that the Opposition, if they should succeed in defeating his Bill, would be compelled themselves to pass a much severer Bill of the same kind. We are bold to say that they will do nothing of the sort. If happily Mr Gladstone should find himself cut short in the dangerous course on which he has entered, of submitting to the dictates of men who are bold enough and reckless enough to defy the laws, he may rely upon it that his opponents

will not imitate him in a method so unworthy. They quite understand that it is the duty of the Executive Government to make the laws respected, to uphold the unoffending citizen in all the rights which the law allows him, and to preserve the peace of the land, so that industry may have free course, and life and property may be secure.

When this paper was commenced, Mr Parnell had not carried out his intention of refusing his support to the second reading of the Bill. He has done so now, and he has declared his reason, which may in few words be stated to be, that the measure is not one-sided enough—that it does not operate sufficiently in favour of the tenant and against the landlord. He has made it plain that it can never be a settlement, as far as he and his friends are concerned.

We do not comment upon the very temperate and very able speech in which Sir Stafford Northcote summed up the views and course of action of the Conservative party, because we give to the whole of that speech a hearty assent. It sets forth in clear and powerful language the same views which the Magazine has always supported, and it points to the course of action which we desire to see adopted.

We have been beaten by numbers; but we have every reason to be satisfied with the arguments which have been used by our side, and feel that in the debate we have triumphed. So far our duty has been devotedly done. We doubt not that similar devotion will be shown through the remaining course of the Bill. If it be ordained that numbers must overcome right, it is not we Conservatives, who will have to blush for, or to answer for, the issue.

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